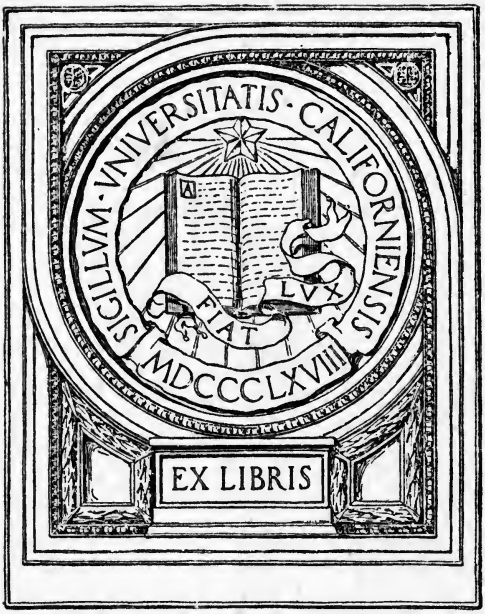

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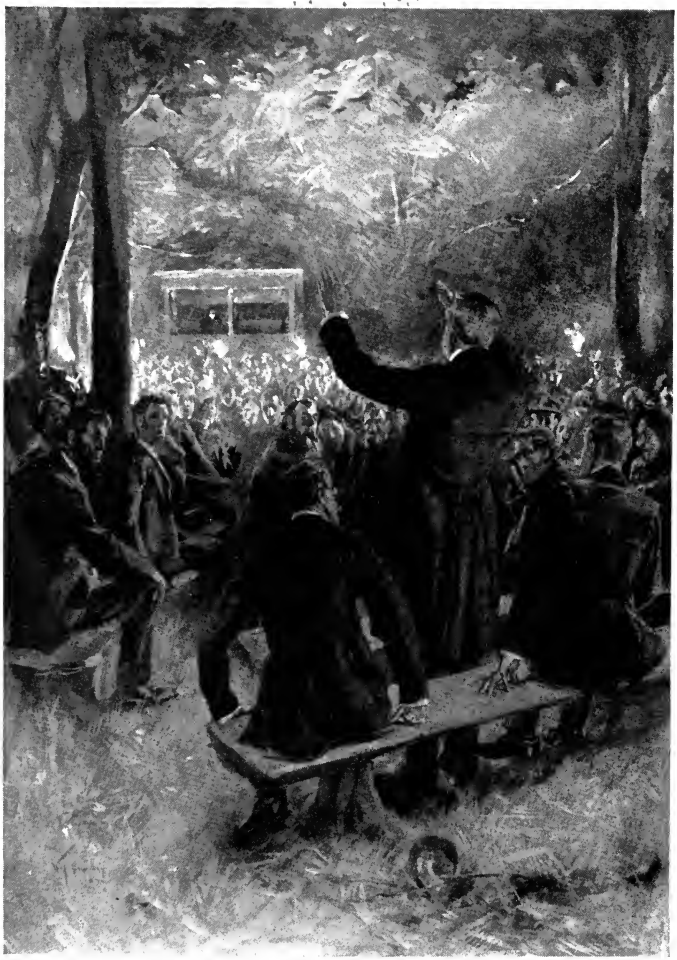

"THE BISHOP, HIS EYES STILL FAR AWAY, HIS HANDS STRETCHED OUT OVER THE PEOPLE, WENT ON"

THE STORIES

OF

H. C. BUNNER

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NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
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LOVE IN OLD CLOATHES

NEWE YORK, ye 1st Aprile, 1883.

YE worste of my ailment is this, yt it groweth not Less with much nursinge, but is like to those fevres wch ye leeches Starve, 'tis saide, for that ye more Bloode there be in ye Sicke man's Bodie, ye more foode is there for ye Distemper to feede upon.—And it is moste fittinge yt I come backe to ys my Journall (wherein I have not writt a Lyne these manye months) on ye 1st of Aprile, beinge in some Sort myne owne foole and ye foole of Love, and a poore Butt on whome his hearte hath play'd a Sorry tricke.—

For it is surelie a strange happeninge, that I, who am ofte accompted a man of ye Worlde, (as ye Phrase goes,) sholde be soe Overtaken and caste downe lyke a Schooleboy or a countrie Bumpkin, by a meere Mayde, & sholde set to Groaninge and Sighinge, &, for that She will not have me Sighe to Her, to Groaninge and Sighinge on paper, wch is ye greter Foolishnesse in Me, yt some one maye reade it Here-after, who hath taken his dose of ye same Physicke, and made no Wrye faces over it; in wch case I doubte I shall be much laugh'd at.—Yet soe much am I a foole, and soe enamour'd of my Foolishnesse, yt I have a sorte of Shamefull Joye in tellinge, even to my Journall, yt I am mightie

deepe in Love withe ye yonge Daughter of Mistresse Ffrench, and all maye knowe what an Angell is ye Daughter, since I have chose Mrs. French for my Mother in Lawe.—(Though she will have none of my chosinge.)—and I likewise take comforte in ye Fancie, y^t^ this poore Sheete, wh^on^ I write, may be made of ye Raggs of some lucklesse Lover, and maye ye more readilie drinke up my complaininge Inke.—

This muche I have learnt y^t^ Fraunce distilles not, nor ye Indies growe not, ye Remedie for my Aile.—For when I 1st became sensible of ye folly of my Suite, I tooke to drynkinge & smoakinge, thinkinge to cure my minde, but all I got was a head ache, for fellowe to my Hearte ache.—A sorrie Payre!—I then made Shifte, for a while, withe a Bicycle, but breakinge of Bones mendes no breakinge of Heartes, and 60 myles a Daye brings me no nearer to a Weddinge.—This being Lowe Sondaye, (wch my Hearte telleth me better than ye Allmanack,) I will goe to Churche; wh. I maye chaunce to see her.—Laste weeke, her Eastre bonnett vastlie pleas'd me, beinge most cunninglie devys'd in ye mode of oure Grandmothers, and verie lyke to a coales Scuttle, of white satine.—

2nd Aprile.

I trust I make no more moane, than is just for a man in my case, but there is small comforte in lookinge at ye backe of a white Satine bonnett for two Houres, and I maye saye as much.—Neither

any cheere in Her goinge out of ye Churche, & Walkinge downe ye Avenue, with a Puppe by ye name of Williamson.

4th Aprile.

Because a man have a Hatt with a Brimme to it like ye Poope-Decke of a Steam-Shippe, and breeches lyke ye Case of an umbrella, and have loste money on Hindoo, he is not therefore in ye beste Societie.—I made this observation, at ye Clubbe, last night, in ye hearinge of Wmson, who made a mightie Pretence to reade ye Spt of ye Tymes.—I doubte it was scurvie of me, but it did me muche goode.

7th Aprile.

Ye manner of my meetinge with Her and fallinge in Love with Her (for ye two were of one date) is thus.—I was made acquainte withe Her on a Wednesdaie, at ye House of Mistresse Varick, ('twas a Reception,) but did not hear Her Name, nor She myne, by reason of ye noise, and of Mrsse Varick having but lately a newe sett of Teethe, of wh. she had not yet gott, as it were, ye just Pitche and accordance.—I sayde to Her that ye Weather was warm for that season of ye yeare.—She made answer She thought I was right, for Mr Williamson had saide ye same thinge to Her not a minute past. —I tolde Her She must hold it originall or an Invention of Wmson, for ye Speache had beene manie yeares in my Familie.—Answer was made, She wolde be muche bounden to me if I wolde

maintaine ye Rightes of my Familie, and lett all others from usinge of my propertie, when perceivinge Her to be of a livelie Witt, I went about to ingage Her in converse, if onlie so I mightie looke into Her Eyes, wh. were of a coloure suche as I have never seene before, more like to a Pansie, or some such flower, than anything else I can compair with them.—Shortlie we grew most friendlie, so that She did aske me if I colde keepe a Secrett.—I answering I colde, She saide She was anhungered, having Shopp'd all ye forenoone since Breakfast.—She pray'd me to gett Her some Foode.—What, I ask'd.—She answer'd merrilie, a Beefesteake.—I tolde Her y^t^ that *Confection* was not on ye Side-Boarde; but I presentlie brought her such as there was, & She beinge behinde a Screane, I stoode in ye waie, so y^t^ none mighte see Her, & She did eate and drynke as followeth, to witt—

iij cupps of Bouillon (wch is a Tea, or Tisane, of Beafe, made verie hott & thinne)
iv Alberte Biscuit
ij éclairs
i creame-cake

together with divers small cates and comfeits wh^of^ I know not ye names.

So y^t^ I was grievously afeared for Her Digestion, leste it be over-tax'd. Saide this to Her, however addinge it was my Conceite, y^t^ by some Processe, lyke Alchemie, wh^by^ ye baser metals are transmuted into golde, so ye grosse mortall foode was on Her lippes chang'd to ye fabled Nectar & Ambrosia of ye Gods.—She tolde me 't was a sillie

Speache, yet seam'd not ill-pleas'd withall.—She hath a verie prettie Fashion, or Tricke, of smilinge, when She hath made an end of speakinge, and layinge Her finger upon Her nether Lippe, like as She wolde bid it be stille.—After some more Talke, wh^in^ She show'd that Her Witt was more deepe, and Her minde more seriouslie inclin'd, than I had Thoughte from our first Jestinge, She beinge call'd to go thence, I did see Her mother, whose face I knewe, & was made sensible, y^t^ I had given my Hearte to ye daughter of a House wh. with myne owne had longe been at grievous Feud, for ye folly of oure Auncestres.—Havinge come to wh. heavie momente in my Tale, I have no Patience to write more to-nighte.

22nd Aprile.

I was mynded to write no more in y^s^ journall, for verie Shame's sake, y^t^ I shoude so complayne, lyke a Childe, whose toie is taken f^m^ him, butt (may-happ for it is nowe ye fulle Moone, & a moste greavous period for them y^t^ are Love-strucke) I am fayne, lyke ye Drunkarde who maye not abstayne f^m^ his cupp, to sett me anewe to record-inge of My Dolorous mishapp.—When I sawe Her agayn, She beinge aware of my name, & of ye division betwixt oure Houses, wolde have none of me, butt I wolde not be putt Off, & made bolde to question Her, why She sholde me suche exceed^s^ Coldness.—She answer'd 't was wel knowne what Wronge my Grandefather had done Her G.father. —I saide, She confounded me with My G.father—

we were nott ye same Persone, he beinge muche my Elder, & besydes Dead.—She w^d^ have it, 't was no matter for jestinge.—I tolde Her I wolde be resolv'd, what grete Wronge y^is^ was.—Y^e^ more for to make Speache th^n^ for mine owne advertisem^t^, for I knewe wel ye whole Knaverie, wh. She rehears'd, Howe my G.father had cheated her G.father of Landes upp ye River, with more, howe my G.father had impounded ye cattle of Hern.—I made answer, 't was foolishnesse, in my mynde, for ye iii^d^ Generation to so quarrell over a Parsel of rascallie Landes, y^t^ had long ago beene solde for Taxes, y^t^ as to ye Cowes, I wolde make them goode, & th^r^ Produce & Offspringe, if it tooke ye whole Wash^tn^ Markett.—She however tolde me y^t^ ye Ffrenche family had ye where w^al^ to buye what they lack'd in Butter, Beafe & Milke, and likewise in *Veale,* wh. laste I tooke muche to Hearte, wh. She seeinge, became more gracious &, on my pleadinge, accorded y^t^ I sholde have ye Privilege to speake with Her when we next met.—But neyther then, nor at any other tyme th^after^ wolde She suffer me to visitt Her. So I was harde putt to it to compass waies of gettinge to see Her at such Houses as She mighte be att, for Routs or Feasts, or ye lyke.—

But though I sawe Her manie tymes, oure converse was ever of y^is^ Complex^n^, & ye accursed G-father satt downe, and rose upp with us.—Yet colde I see by Her aspecte, y^t^ I had in some sorte Her favoure, & y^t^ I mislyk'd Her not so gretelie as She w^d^ have me thinke.—So y^t^ one daie, ('t was in

Januarie, & verie colde,) I, beinge moste distrackt, saide to Her, I had tho't 'twolde pleasure Her more, to be friends w. a man, who had a knave for a G.father, y^n^ with One who had no G.father att alle, lyke W^mson^ (ye Puppe).—She made answer, I was exceedinge fresshe, or some such matter. She cloath'd her thoughte in phrase more befittinge a Gentlewoman.—Att this I colde no longer contayne myself, but tolde Her roundlie, I lov'd Her, & 't was my Love made me soe unmannerlie.—And w. y^is^ speache I att ye leaste made an End of my Uncertaintie, for She bade me speake w. Her no more.—I wolde be determin'd, whether I was Naught to Her.—She made Answer She colde not justlie say I was Naught, seeing y^t^ wh^ever^ She might bee, I was One too manie.—I saide, 't was some Comforte, I had even a Place in Her thoughtes, were it onlie in Her Disfavour.—She saide, my Solace was indeede grete, if it kept pace with ye measure of Her Disfavour, for, in plain Terms, She hated me, & on her intreatinge of me to goe, I went.—Y^is^ happ'd att ye house of M^rss^ Varicke, wh. I 1st met Her, who (M^rss^ Varicke) was for staying me, y^t^ I might eate some Ic'd Cream, butt of a Truth I was chill'd to my Taste allreadie.—Albeit I afterwards tooke to walkinge of ye Streets till near Midnight.—'Twas as I saide before in Januarie & exceedinge colde.

20th Maie.

How wearie is y^is^ dulle procession of ye Yeare! For it irketh my Soule y^t^ each Monthe shoude come

so aptlie after ye Month afore, & Nature looke so Smug, as She had done some grete thinge.—Surelie if she make no Change, she hath work'd no Miracle, for we know wel, what we maye look for.—Ye Vine under my Window hath broughte forth Purple Blossoms, as itt hath eache Springe these xii Yeares.—I wolde have had them Redd, or Blue, or I knowe not what Coloure, for I am sicke of likinge of Purple a Dozen Springs in Order.—And wh. moste galls me is yis, I knowe howe yis sadd Rounde will goe on, & Maie give Place to June, & she to July, & onlie my Hearte blossom not nor my Love growe no greener.

2nd June.

I and my Foolishnesse, we laye Awake last night till ye Sunrise gun, wh. was Shott att 4½ o'ck, & wh. beinge hearde in yt stillnesse fm. an Incredible Distance, seem'd lyke as 'twere a Full Stopp, or Period putt to yis Wakinge-Dreminge, what I did turne a newe Leafe in my Counsells, and after much Meditation, have commenc't a newe Chapter, wh. I hope maye leade to a better Conclusion, than them yt came afore.—For I am nowe resolv'd, & havinge begunn wil carry to an Ende, yt if I maie not over-come my Passion, I maye at ye least overcom ye Melanchollie, & Spleene, borne yof, & beinge a Lover, be none ye lesse a Man.—To wh. Ende I have come to yis Resolution, to depart fm. ye Towne, & to goe to ye Countrie-House of my Frend, Will Winthrop, who has often intreated me, & has instantly urg'd, yt I sholde make him a Visitt.—

And I take much Shame to myselfe, y^t^ I have not given him y^is^ Satisfaction since he was married, wh. is nowe ii Yeares.—A goode Fellowe, & I minde me a grete Burden to his Frends when he was in Love, in wh. Plight I mockt him, who am nowe, I much feare me, mockt myselfe.

3rd June.

Pack'd my cloathes, beinge Sundaye. Y^e^ better ye Daie, ye better ye Deede.

4th June.

Goe downe to Babylon to-daye.

5th June.

Att Babylon, at ye Cottage of Will Winthrop, wh. is no Cottage, but a grete House, Red, w. Verandahs, & builded in ye Fash^n^ of Her Maiestie Q. Anne.—Found a mighty Housefull of People.—Will, his Wife, a verie proper Fayre Ladie, who gave me moste gracious Reception, Mr^ss^ Smithe, ye ii Gresham girls (knowne as ye Tittering Twins), Bob White, Virginia Kinge & her Moth^r^, Clarence Winthrop, & ye whole Alexander Family.—A grete Gatheringe for so earlie in ye Summer.—In ye Afternoone play'd Lawne-Tenniss.—Had for Partner one of ye Twinns, ag^st^ Clarence Winthrop & ye other Twinn, wh. by beinge Confus'd, I loste iii games.—Was voted a Duffer.—Clarence Winthrop moste unmannerlie merrie.—He call'd me ye Sad-Ey'd Romeo, & lykewise cut down ye Hammocke wh^in^ I laye, allso tied up my Cloathes wh.

we were att Bath.—He sayde, he Chaw'd them, a moste barbarous worde for a moste barbarous Use. —Wh. we were Boyes, & he did y^is^ thinge, I was wont to trounce him Soundlie, but nowe had to contente Myselfe w. beatinge of him iii games of Billyardes in ye Evg., & w. daringe of him to putt on ye Gloves w. me, for Funne, wh. he mighte not doe, for I coude knocke him colde.

10th June.

Beinge gon to my Roome somewhatt earlie, for I found myselfe of a peevish humour, Clarence came to me, and pray^d^ a few minutes' Speache.— Sayde 't was Love made him so Rude and Boysterous, he was privilie betroth'd to his Cozen, Angelica Robertes, she whose Father lives at Islipp, & colde not containe Himself for Joye.—I sayinge, there was a Breache in ye Familie, he made Answer, 't was true, her Father & His, beinge Cozens, did hate each other moste heartilie, butt for him he cared not for that, & for Angelica, She gave not a Continentall.—But, sayde I, Your Consideration matters mightie Little, synce ye Governours will not heare to it.—He answered 't was for that he came to me, I must be his allie, for reason of oure olde Friend^sp^. With that I had no Hearte to heare more, he made so Light of suche a Division as parted me & my Happinesse, but tolde him I was his Frend, wolde serve him when he had neede of me, & presentlie seeing my Humour, he made excuse to goe, & left me to write downe this, sicke in Mynde, and thinkinge ever of ye Woman

who wil not oute of my Thoughtes for any change of Place, neither of employe.—For indeede I doe love Her moste heartilie, so y^t^ my Wordes cannot saye it, nor will y^is^ Booke containe it.—So I wil even goe to Sleepe, y^t^ in my Dreames perchaunce my Fancie maye do my Hearte better Service

12th June.

She is here.—What Spyte is y^is^ of Fate & ye alter'd gods! That I, who mighte nott gett to see Her when to See was to Hope, muste nowe daylie have Her in my Sight, stucke like a fayre Apple under olde Tantalus his Nose.—Goinge downe to ye Hotell to-day, for to gett me some Tobackoe, was made aware y^t^ ye Ffrench familie had hyred one of ye Cottages round-abouts.—'T is a goodlie Dwellinge Without—Would I coude speake with as much Assurance of ye Innsyde!

13th June.

Goinge downe to ye Hotell againe To-day for more Tobackoe, sawe ye accursed name of W^mson^ on ye Registre.—Went about to a neighboringe Farm & satt me downe behynd ye Barne, for a ½ an Houre.—Frighted ye Horned Cattle w. talkinge to My Selfe.

15th June.

I wil make an Ende to y^is^ Businesse.—Wil make no longer Staye here.—Sawe Her to-day, driven Home fm. ye Beache, about 4½ of ye After-noone, by W^mson^ in his Dogge-Carte, wh. ye Cadde has

broughten here.—Wil betake me to ye Boundlesse Weste—Not y^t^ I care aught for ye Boundlesse Weste, butt y^t^ I shal doe wel if haplie I leave my Memourie am^g^ ye Apaches & bringe Home my Scalpe.

16th June.

To Fyre Islande, in Winthrop's Yacht—ye Twinnes w. us, so Titteringe & Choppinge Laughter, y^t^ 't was worse y^n^ a Flocke of Sandpipers.—Found a grete Concourse of people there, Her amonge them, in a Suite of blue, y^t^ became Her bravelie.—She swimms lyke to a Fishe, butt everie Stroke of Her white Arms (of a lovelie Roundnesse) cleft, as 't were my Hearte, rather y^n^ ye Water.—She bow'd to me, on goinge into ye Water, w. muche Dignitie, & agayn on Cominge out, but y^is^ Tyme w. lesse Dignitie, by reason of ye Water in Her Cloathes, & Her Haire in Her Eyes.—

17th June.

Was for goinge awaie To-morrow, but Clarence cominge againe to my Chamber, & mightilie purswadinge of me, I feare I am comitted to a verie sillie Undertakinge.—For I am promis'd to Help him secretlie to wedd his Cozen.—He wolde take no Deniall, wolde have it, his Brother car'd Naughte, 't was but ye Fighte of theyre Fathers, he was bounde it sholde be done, & 't were best I stoode his Witness, who was wel lyked of bothe ye Braunches of ye Family.—So 't was agree'd, y^t^ I shal staye Home to-morrowe fm. ye Expedition to

Fyre Islande, feigning a Head-Ache, (wh. indeede I meante to do, in any Happ, for I cannot see Her againe,) & shall meet him at ye little Churche on ye Southe Roade.—He to drive to Islipp to fetch Angelica, lykewise her Witnesse, who sholde be some One of ye Girles, she hadd not yet made her Choice.—I made yis Condition, it sholde not be either of ye Twinnes.—No, nor Bothe, for that matter.—Inquiringe as to ye Clergyman, he sayde ye Dominie was allreadie Squar'd.

Newe York, Ye Buckingham Hotell, 19th June.

I am come to ye laste Entrie I shall ever putt downe in ys Booke, and needes must yt I putt it downe quicklie, for all hath Happ'd in so short a Space, yt my Heade whirles w. thynkinge of it. Ye after-noone of Yesterdaye, I set about Counterfeittinge of a Head-Ache, & so wel did I compass it, yt I verilie thinke one of ye Twinnes was mynded to Stay Home & nurse me.—All havinge gone off, & Clarence on his way to Islipp, I sett forth for ye Church, where arriv'd I founde it emptie, w. ye Door open.—Went in & writh'd on ye hard Benches for a ¼ of an Houre, when, hearinge a Sounde, I look'd up & saw standinge in ye Doorwaye, Katherine Ffrench.—She seem'd muche astonished, saying You Here! or ye lyke.—I made Answer & sayde yt though my Familie were greate Sinners, yet had they never been Excommunicate by ye Churche.—She sayde, they colde not Putt Out what never was in.—While I was bethynkinge me wh. I mighte answer to yis, she went on, sayinge

I must excuse Her, She wolde goe upp in ye Organ Lofte.—I enquiring what for? She sayde to practice on ye Organ.—She turn'd verie Redd, of a warm Coloure, as She sayde this.—I ask'd Do you come hither often? She replyinge Yes, I enquir'd how ye Organ lyked Her.—She sayde Right well, when I made question more curiously (for she grew more Redd eache moment) how was ye Action? ye Tone? how manie Stopps? Whst she growinge gretelie Confus'd, I led Her into ye Churche, & show'd Her yt there was no Organ, yt Choire beinge indeede a Band, of i Tuninge-Forke, i Kitt, & i Horse-Fiddle.—At this She fell to Smilinge & Blushinge att one Tyme.—She perceiv'd our Errandes were ye Same & crav'd Pardon for Her Fibb.—I told Her, If She came Thither to be Witness at her Frend's Weddinge, 'twas no greate Fibb, 'twolde indeede be Practice for Her.—This havinge a rude Sound, I added I thankt ye Starrs yt had bro't us Together. She sayde if ye Starrs appoint'd us to meete no oftener yn this Couple shoude be Wedded, She was wel content. This cominge on me lyke a last Buffett of Fate, that She shoude so despitefully intreat me, I was suddenlie Seized with so Sorrie a Humour, & withal so angrie, yt I colde scarce Containe myselfe, but went & Sat downe near ye Doore, lookinge out till Clarence shd. come w. his Bride.—Looking over my Sholder, I sawe yt She went fm. Windowe to Windowe within, Pluckinge ye Blossoms fm. ye Vines, & settinge them in her Girdle.—She seem'd most tall and faire, & swete to look

uponn, & itt Anger'd me ye More.—Meanwhiles, She discours'd pleasantlie, asking me manie questions, to the wh. I gave but shorte and churlish answers. She ask'd Did I nott Knowe Angelica Roberts was Her best Frend? How longe had I knowne of ye Betrothal? Did I think 'twolde knitt ye House together, & Was it not Sad to see a Familie thus Divided?—I answer'd Her, I wd. not robb a Man of ye precious Righte to Quarrell with his Relations.—And then, with meditatinge on ye goode Lucke of Clarence, & my owne harde Case, I had suche a sudden Rage of peevishness yt I knewe scarcelie what I did. Soe when she ask'd me merrilie why I turn'd my Backe on Her, I made Reply I had turn'd my Backe on much Follie.—Wh. was no sooner oute of my Mouthe than I was mightilie Sorrie for it, and turninge aboute, I perceiv'd She was in Teares & weepinge bitterlie. What my Hearte wolde holde no More, & I rose upp & tooke Her in my arms & Kiss'd & Comforted Her, She makinge no Denyal, but seeminge greatlie to Neede such Solace, wh. I was not Loathe to give Her.—Whiles we were at This, onlie She had gott to Smilinge, & to sayinge of Things which even yis paper shal not knowe, came in ye Dominie, sayinge He judg'd We were the Couple he came to Wed.—With him ye Sexton & ye Sexton's Wife.—My swete Kate, alle as Rosey as Venus's Nape, was for Denyinge of yis, butt I wolde not have it, & sayde Yes.—She remonstrating w. me, privilie, I tolde Her She must not make me Out a Liar, yt to Deceave ye Man of God were a greavous Sinn, yt

I had gott Her nowe, & wd. not lett her Slipp from me, & did soe Talk Her Downe, & w. such Strengthe of joie, y^t^ allmost before She knewe it, we Stoode upp, & were Wed, w. a Ringe (tho' She Knewe it nott) wh. belong'd to My G father. (Him y^t^ Cheated Her^n^.)—

Wh was no sooner done, than in came Clarence & Angelica, & were Wedded in theyre Turn.—The Clergyman greatlie surprised, but more att ye Largeness of his Fee.

This Businesse being Ended, we fled by ye Trayne of 4½ o'cke, to y^is^ Place, where we wait till ye Bloode of all ye Ffrenches have Tyme to coole downe, for ye wise Mann who meeteth his Mother in Lawe ye 1st tyme, wil meete her when she is Milde.—

And so I close y^is^ Journall, wh., tho' for ye moste Parte 'tis but a peevish Scrawle, hath one Page of Golde, wh^on^ I have writ ye laste strange Happ wh^by^ I have layd Williamson by ye Heeles & found me ye sweetest Wife y^t^ ever

. . . . . .

stopp'd a man's Mouthe w. kisses for writinge of Her Prayses.

A LETTER AND A PARAGRAPH

I

THE LETTER

New York, Nov. 16, 1883.

My Dear Will:—

You cannot be expected to remember it, but this is the fifth anniversary of my wedding-day, and to-morrow—it will be to-morrow before this letter is closed—is my birthday—my fortieth. My head is full of those thoughts which the habit of my life moves me to put on paper, where I can best express them; and yet which must be written for only the friendliest of eyes. It is not the least of my happiness in this life that I have one friend to whom I can unlock my heart as I can to you.

The wife has just been putting your namesake to sleep. Don't infer that, even on the occasion of this family feast, he has been allowed to sit up until half past eleven. He went to bed properly enough, with a tear or two, at eight; but when his mother stole into his room just now, after her custom, I heard his small voice raised in drowsy inquiry; and I followed her, and slipped the curtain of the doorway aside, and looked. But I did not go into the room.

The shaded lamp was making a yellow glory in one spot—the head of the little brass crib where my wife knelt by my boy. I saw the little face, so like hers, turned up to her. There was a smile on it that I knew was a reflection of hers. He was winking in a merry half-attempt to keep awake; but wakefulness was slipping away from him under the charm of that smile I could not see. His brown eyes closed, and opened for an instant, and closed again as the tender, happy hush of a child's sleep settled down upon him, and he was gone where we in our heavier slumbers shall hardly follow him. Then, before I could see my wife's face as she bent and kissed him, I let the curtain fall, and crept back here, to sit by the last of the fire, and see that sacred sight again with the spiritual eyes, and to dream wonderingly over the unspeakable happiness that has in some mysterious way come to me, undeserving.

I tell you, Will, that moment was to me like one of those moments of waking that we know in childhood, when we catch the going of a dream too subtly sweet to belong to this earth—a glad vision, gone before our eyes can open wide; not to be figured into any earthly idea, leaving in its passage a joy so high and fine that the poets tell us it is a memory of some heaven from which our young souls are yet fresh.

You can understand how it is that I find it hard to realize that there can be such things in my life; for you know what that life was up to a few years ago. I am like a man who has spent his first

thirty years in a cave. It takes more than a decade above ground to make him quite believe in the sun and the blue of the sky.

I was sitting just now before the hearth, with my feet in the bearskin rug you sent us two Christmases ago. The light of the low wood fire was chasing the shadows around the room, over my books and my pictures, and all the fine and gracious luxuries with which I may now make my eyes and my heart glad, and pamper the tastes that grow with feeding. I was taking count, so to speak, of my prosperity—the material treasures, the better treasure that I find in such portion of fame as the world has allotted me, and the treasure of treasures across the threshold of the next room—in the next room? No—there, here, in every room, in every corner of the house, filling it with peace, is the gentle and holy spirit of love.

As I sat and thought, my mind went back to the day that you and I first met, twenty-two years ago—twenty-two in February next. In twenty-two years more I could not forget that hideous first day in the city room of the *Morning Record.* I can see the great gloomy room, with its meagre gas-jets lighting up, here and there, a pale face at a desk, and bringing out in ghastly spots the ugliness of the ink-smeared walls. A winter rain was pouring down outside. I could feel its chill and damp in the room, though little of it was to be seen through the grimy window-panes. The composing room in the rear sent a smell of ink and benzine to permeate the moist atmosphere. The rumble and

shiver of the great presses printing the weekly came up from below. I sat there in my wet clothes and waited for my first assignment. I was eighteen, poor as a church mouse, green, desperately hopeful after a boy's fashion, and with nothing in my head but the Latin and Greek of my one single year at college. My spirit had sunk down far out of sight. My heart beat nervously at every sound of that awful city editor's voice, as he called up his soldiers one by one and assigned them to duty. I could only silently pray that he would "give me an easy one," and that I should not disgrace myself in the doing of it. By Jove, Will, what an old martinet Baldwin was, for all his good heart! Do you remember that sharp, crackling voice of his, and the awful "Be brief! be brief!" that always drove all capacity for condensation out of a man's head, and set him to stammering out his story with wordy incoherence? Baldwin is on the *Record* still. I wonder what poor devil is trembling at this hour under that disconcerting adjuration.

A wretched day that was! The hours went slow as grief. Smeary little bare-armed fiends trotted in from the composing-room and out again, bearing fluttering galley-proofs. Bedraggled, hollow-eyed men came in from the streets and set their soaked umbrellas to steam against the heater, and passed into the lion's den to feed him with news, and were sent out again to take up their half cooked umbrellas and go forth to forage for more. Everyone, I thought, gave me one brief glance of

contempt and curiosity, and put me out of his thoughts. Everyone had some business—everyone but me. The men who had been waiting with me were called up one by one and detailed to work. I was left alone.

Then a new horror came to torture my nervously active imagination. Had my superior officer forgotten his new recruit? Or could he find no task mean enough for my powers? This filled me at first with a sinking shame, and then with a hot rage and sense of wrong. Why should he thus slight me? Had I not a right to be tried, at least? Was there any duty he could find that I would not perform or die? I would go to him and tell him that I had come there to work; and would make him give me the work. No, I should simply be snubbed, and sent to my seat like a schoolboy, or perhaps discharged on the spot. I must bear my humiliation in silence.

I looked up and saw you entering, with your bright, ruddy boy's face shining with wet, beaming a greeting to all the room. In my soul I cursed you, at a venture, for your lightheartedness and your look of cheery self-confidence. What a vast stretch of struggle and success set you above me—you, the reporter, above me, the novice! And just then came the awful summons—"Barclay! Barclay!"—I shall hear that strident note at the judgment day. I went in and got my orders, and came out with them, all in a sort of daze that must have made Baldwin think me an idiot. And then you came up to me and scraped acquaintance in a desul-

tory way, to hide your kind intent; and gave me a hint or two as to how to obtain a full account of the biennial meeting of the Post-Pliocene Mineralogical Society, or whatever it was without diving too deeply into the Post-Pliocene period. I would have fought for you to the death, at that moment.

'Twas a small matter, but the friendship begun in manly and helpful kindness has gone on for twenty-two years in mutual faith and loyalty; and the growth dignifies the seed.

A sturdy growth it was in its sapling days. It was in the late spring that we decided to take the room together in St. Mark's Place. A big room and a poor room, indeed, on the third story of that "battered caravanseria," and for twelve long years it held us and our hopes and our despairs and our troubles and our joys.

I don't think I have forgotten one detail of that room. There is the generous old fireplace, insultingly bricked up by modern poverty, all save the meagre niche that holds our fire—when we can have a fire. There is the great second-hand table —our first purchase—where we sit and work for immortality in the scant intervals of working for life. Your drawer, with the manuscript of your "Concordance of Political Economy," is to the right. Mine is to the left; it holds the unfinished play, and the poems that might better have been unfinished. There are the two narrow cots—yours to the left of the door as you enter; mine to the right.

How strange that I can see it all so clearly, now that all is different!

Yet I can remember myself coming home at one o'clock at night, dragging my tired feet up those dark, still, tortuous stairs, gripping the shaky baluster for aid. I open the door—I can feel the little old-fashioned brass knob in my palm even now—and I look to the left. Ah, you are already at home and in bed. I need not look toward the table. There is money—a little—in the common treasury; and, in accordance with our regular compact, I know there stand on that table twin bottles of beer, half a loaf of rye bread, and a double palm's-breadth of Swiss cheese. You are staying your hunger in sleep; for one may not eat until the other comes. I will wake you up, and we shall feast together and talk over the day that is dead and the day that is begun.

Strange, is it not, that I should have some trouble to realize that this is only a memory,—I, with my feet in the bearskin rug that it would have beggared the two of us, or a dozen like us, to purchase in those days. Strange that my mind should be wandering on the crude work of my boyhood and my early manhood. I who have won name and fame, as the world would say. I, to whom young men come for advice and encouragement, as to a tried veteran! Strange that I should be thinking of a time when even your true and tireless friendship could not quench a subtle hunger at my heart, a hunger for a more dear and intimate comradeship. I, with the tenderest of wives scarce out of

my sight; even in her sleep she is no further from me than my own soul.

Strangest of all this, that the mad agony of grief, the passion of desolation that came upon me when our long partnership was dissolved for ever, should now be nothing but a memory, like other memories, to be summoned up out of the resting-places of the mind, toyed with, idly questioned, and dismissed with a sigh and a smile! What a real thing it was just ten years ago; what a very present pain! Believe me, Will,—yes, I want you to believe this—that in those first hours of loneliness I could have welcomed death; death would have fallen upon me as calmly as sleep has fallen upon my boy in the room beyond there.

You knew nothing of this then; I suppose you but half believe it now; for our parting was manly enough. I kept as stiff an upper lip as you did, for all there was less hair on it. Perhaps it seems extravagant to you. But there was a deal of difference between our cases. You had turned your pen to money-making, at the call of love; you were going to Stillwater to marry the judge's daughter, and to become a great land-owner and mayor of Stillwater and millionaire—or what is it now? And much of this you foresaw or hoped for, at least. Hope is something. But for me? I was left in the third-story of a poor lodging-house in St. Mark's Place, my best friend gone from me; with neither remembrance nor hope of Love to live

on, and with my last story back from *all* the magazines.

We will not talk about it. Let me get back to my pleasant library with the books and the pictures and the glancing fire-light, and me with my feet in your bearskin rug, listening to my wife's step in the next room.

To your ear, for our communion has been so long and so close that to either one of us the faintest inflection of the other's voice speaks clearer than formulated words; to your ear there must be something akin to a tone of regret—regret for the old days—in what I have just said. And would it be strange if there were? A poor soldier of fortune who had been set to a man's work before he had done with his meagre boyhood, who had passed from recruit to a place of a young veteran in that great, hard-fighting, unresting pioneer army of journalism; was he the man, all of a sudden, to stretch his toughened sinews out and let them relax in the glow of the home hearth? Would not his legs begin to twitch for the road; would he not be wild to feel again the rain in his weather-beaten face? Would you think it strange if at night he should toss in his white, soft bed, longing to change it for a blanket on the turf, with the broad procession of sunlit worlds sweeping over his head, beyond the blue spaces of the night? And even if the dear face on the pillow next him were to wake and look at him with reproachful surprise; and even if

warm arms drew him back to his new allegiance; would not his heart in dreams go throbbing to the rhythm of the drum or the music of songs sung by the camp-fire?

It was so at the beginning, in the incredible happiness of the first year, and even after the boy's birth. Do you know, it was months before I could accept that boy as a *fact?* If, at any moment, he had vanished from my sight, crib and all, I should not have been surprised. I was not sure of him until he began to show his mother's eyes.

Yes, even in those days some of the old leaven worked in me. I had moments of that old barbaric freedom which we used to rejoice in—that feeling of being answerable to nothing in the world save my own will—the sense of untrammeled, careless power.

Do you remember the night that we walked till sunrise? You remember how hot it was at midnight, when we left the office, and how the moonlight on the statue above the City Hall seemed to invite us fieldward, where no gaslight glared, no torches flickered. So we walked idly northward, through the black, silence-stricken down-town streets; through that feverish, unresting central region that lies between the vileness of Houston Street and the calm and spacious dignity of the brown-stone ways, where the closed and darkened dwellings looked like huge tombs in the pallid light of the moon. We passed the suburban belt of shanties; we passed the garden-girt villas beyond them, and it was from the hill above Spuyten

Duyvil that we saw the first color of the morning upon the face of the Palisades.

It would have taken very little in that moment to set us off to tramping the broad earth, for the pure joy of free wayfaring. What was there to hold us back? No tie of home or kin. All we had in the world to leave behind us was some futile scribbling on various sheets of paper. And of that sort of thing both our heads were full enough. I think it was but the veriest chance that, having begun that walk, we did not go on and get our fill of wandering, and ruin our lives.

Well, that same wild, adventurous spirit came upon me now and then. There were times when, for the moment, I forgot that I had a wife and a child. There were times when I remembered them as a burden. Why should I not say this? It is the history of every married man,—at least of every manly man,—though he be married to the best woman in the world. It means no lack of love. It is as unavoidable as the leap of the blood in you that answers a trumpet-call.

At first I was frightened, and fought against it as against something that might grow upon me. I reproached myself for disloyalty in thought. Ah! what need had *I* to fight? What need had I to choke down rebellious fancies, while my wife's love was working that miracle that makes two spirits one?

What is it, this union that comes to us as a surprise, and remains for all outside an incommunicable mystery? What is this that makes our un-

married love seem so slight and childish a thing? You and I, who know it, know that it is no mere fruit of intimacy and usage, although in its growth it keeps pace with these. We know that in some subtle way it has been given to a man to see a woman's soul as he sees his own, and to a woman to look into a man's heart as if it were, indeed, hers. But the friend who sits at my table, seeing that my wife and I understand each other at a simple meeting of the eyes, makes no more of it than he does of the glance of intelligence which, with close friends, often takes the place of speech. He never dreams of the sweet delight with which we commune together in a language that he cannot understand—that he cannot hear—a language that has no formulated words, feeling answering feeling.

It is not wonderful that I should wish to give expression to the gratitude with which I have seen my life made to blossom thus; my thankfulness for the love which has made me not only a happier, but, I humbly believe, a wiser and a better-minded man. But I know too well the hopelessness of trying to find words to describe what, were I a poet, my best song might but faintly, faintly echo.

I thought I heard a rustle behind me just now. In a little while my wife will come softly into the room, and softly up to where I am sitting, stepping silently across your bearskin rug, and will lay one hand softly on my left shoulder, while the other slips down this arm with which I write, until it falls and closes lightly, yet with loving firmness, on my my hand that holds the pen. And I shall say,

"Only the last words to Will and his wife, dear." And she will release my hand, and will lift her own, I think, to caress the patch of gray hair on my temple; it is a way she has, as though it were some pitiful scar, and she will say, "Give them my love, and tell them they must not fail us this Christmas. I want them to see how our Willy has grown." And when she says "Our Willy," the hand on my shoulder will instinctively close a little, clingingly; and she will bend her head, and put her face close to mine, and I shall turn to look into her eyes.

. . . . . .

Bear with me, my dear Will, until I have told you why I have written this letter and what it means. I have concealed one thing from you for the last six months. I have disease of the heart, and the doctor has told me that I may die at any moment. Somehow, I think—I know the moment is close at hand; I shall soon go to that narrow cot on the right of the door, and I do not believe I shall wake up in the morning with the sun in my eyes, to look across the room and see that its companion is gone.

For I am in the old room, Will, as you know, and it is not ten years since you went away, but two days. The picture that has seemed real to me as I wrote these pages is fading, and the thin gas-jet flickers and sinks as it always did in these first morning hours. I can hear the roar of the last Harlem train swell and sink, and the sharp clink of car-bells break the silence that follows. The wind is gasping and struggling in the chimney, and blow-

ing a white powdery ash down on the hearth. I have just burnt my poems and the play. Both the table drawers are empty now; and soon enough the two empty chairs will stare at each other across the bare table. What a wild dream have I dreamt in all this emptiness! Just now, I thought indeed that it was true. I thought I heard a woman's step behind me, and I turned—

Peace be with you, Will, in the fulness of your love. I am going to sleep. Perhaps I shall dream it all again, and shall hear that soft footfall when the turn of the night comes, and the pale light through the ragged blind, and the end of a long loneliness.

After I am dead, I wish you to think of me not as I was, but as I wanted to be. I have tried to show you that I have led by your side a happier and dearer life of hope and aspiration than the one you saw. I have tried to leave your memory a picture of me that you will not shrink from calling up when you have a quiet hour and time for thought of the friend whom you knew well; but whom you may, perhaps, know better now that he is dead.

REGINALD BARCLAY.

II

THE PARAGRAPH

[From the *New York Herald* of Nov. 18, 1883.]

Reginald Barclay, a journalist, was found dead in his bed at 15 St. Mark's Place, yesterday morn-

ing. No inquest was held, as Mr. Barclay had been known to be suffering from disease of the heart, and his death was not unexpected. The deceased came originally from Oneida County, and was regarded as a young journalist of considerable promise. He had been for some years on the city staff of the *Record,* and was the correspondent of several out-of-town papers. He had also contributed to the monthly magazines, occasional poems and short stories, which showed the possession, in some measure, of the imaginative faculty. Mr. Barclay was about thirty years of age, and unmarried.

"AS ONE HAVING AUTHORITY"

THE ramshackle little train of three cars was joggling slowly on as only a Southern railroad train can joggle, its whole frame shaking and jarring and rattling in an agony of exertion, utterly out of proportion to the progress it was making. It put me in mind, somehow, of the way a very aged negro saws wood when he sees charitable gentlefolk coming along the road.

In the seat beside me Mr. John McMarsters fidgeted—fidgeted for New York, for the New York papers, for news of the races, for somebody to talk horse with, for a game of cards, or pool, or billiards, or anything that could be called a game. These were the things that made life sweet to Handsome Jack, and these things being denied him for the time being, he fidgeted. He tugged at his great fair mustaches, shifted about his seat, twisted and untwisted his long legs; his face twitched and grimaced, and from time to time he swore under his breath in a futile and scattering way.

Then his light-blue boyish eyes began to wander over the car in a blank, searching stare, and I knew he was looking for "a real live sport." Yes, I knew he would gladly have exchanged my society for that of the humblest jockey from a Kentucky

stable, and that our twenty years of friendship would count as naught in the balance. Yet I did not repine. It is the way of the world. I turned to my book and took a walk with Mr. John Evelyn to see King Charles go by.

Suddenly I felt Jack grasp my arm.

"Say!" he said, "look there! What kind of a boss parson do you call that?"

He pointed to a magnificent old man in the dress of the church, who sat facing us at the other end of the car.

"How's that?" said Jack, who had been graduated of the Bowery and dropped by Columbia College. "Get on to the physique! Why, that man has no business to be a dominie. He was built to fight. Say! he must have been right in his good time when Heenan and Morrissey were on deck. He must have been a beautiful man. How do you suppose they ever got him to take a religious job?"

"John," said I, laying down my book, "I know that your life is practically circumscribed by the race-track, and that you are a bigoted and intolerant sport. But *will* you tell me how an old New Yorker like you, and an old Ninth Warder, can get to your age without knowing Bishop Waldegrave, by sight, at least."

"Well," said Jack, flushing a little, "I suppose he keeps off *my* beat; and I don't worry *his* very much. But I'll tell you one thing, my friend. I don't know much about bishops, but I do know something about men, and I pick this man out of

this car—see? And I'm going to make his acquaintance."

"What do you mean?" I cried, aghast.

"Mean?" repeated Jack. "I mean I'm going to introduce myself to him. He looks as if he'd like to have a little talk with a white man. Who's that fellow with him—that sour little prune?"

"That's his nephew, Frederick Dillington," said I.

"Is it?" said Jack. "Well, I bet he's just waiting for the old man's wealth. I'll bet it on his face. Say! what wages does a bishop get? He's got big money, hasn't he? Thought so. Look at that English valet in the seat behind him. That's the correctest thing I ever saw, and the correct thing comes high. Too correct for me. I'm glad *my* man isn't like that. I wouldn't come home to that man at three o'clock in the morning for five hundred dollars. Why, it would be just an act of holy charity to go over and brighten that bishop up a bit. Come along!"

I talked my best to Jack. I tried my best to make him understand who and what Bishop Waldegrave was, or rather had been. I told him that the Bishop had been in his time the greatest man in his Church, and that he was famous the world over for his scholarship, his philanthropy, his vast abilities, and his splendid oratory, and his power over the hearts and minds of men. I told him that he had long ago retired from active life, and that it was more than suspected that his great mind was failing with his advancing years. I tried to ex-

plain to the honest soul that our company might not be acceptable to such a man. Then I made a hopeless blunder.

"Why, Jack," I said, "think of his age! That man may have baptized your father, and perhaps mine, for all I know."

"That does it," said Jack, rising promptly. "It's a long shot, but I take the chances. I'm going to ask him." And he sped down the aisle.

Three minutes later, I looked over the top of my Evelyn, and saw the Bishop and Jack holding the friendliest of converse, while Mr. Dillington glared at them in an unpleasant way, and the English valet took the strange scene in without saying anything in his face that could remotely suggest an expression. It is one peculiar thing about human nature that there is always a great deal to learn about it.

But now I began to feel uneasy on my own account. I felt sure that Jack, in the simple hospitality of his spirit, would take me into his new friendship; and I felt that much might be pardoned to Jack that might not be pardoned to me. I went back into the smoking-car, which was in the rear of the train—it was one of those trains that travel down the road with one end foremost, and up with the other end in front.

I had smoked two cigars, and was wondering how long I could hold out, when my astonished eyes saw Jack McMarsters appear in the doorway, with the Bishop leaning on his arm.

"All right, now, Bishop," I heard him say, as

he and his tall charge got safely within the car, "free before the wind!"

With athletic skill, yet with a gentleness that was pretty to see, he guided the old man to the seat which I rose to give him. Then, as we settled ourselves opposite, he presented me to Bishop Waldegrave, in his own easy fashion.

"I knew you'd want to know the Bishop," he remarked to me, airily, after the brief ceremony was over. "He did baptize my father, and he thinks he baptized yours. Can you give him any pointers on your old man?"

I looked at the Bishop. He did not smile. He had accepted Jack just as all Jack's friends had accepted him. The old man's broad charity, and the profound knowledge of the world which he had possessed in his days of active service, had opened the way to his heart for all sorts and conditions of men, who bore the passport of genuineness. That passport being undoubtedly in Jack's possession, it made no difference to the Bishop that he spoke a peculiar dialect of the English language.

Moreover, we had not talked a quarter of an hour before I discovered that Jack's interpretation of the expression that the old man's face had worn was absolutely right. His kind and happy spirit *was* yearning for good fellowship. There was that in him which craved better companionship than his cold and soulless caretakers could give him. The dignified, thoughtful lines of his face softened as he talked to us in an eager, pleased way, rambling on of old times and old houses, and

the good men and the dear women whom he had wed and buried. He seemed to grow younger as he talked.

But in a very short time he showed that he was tired, and lying back in his seat, he fell into that curious light slumber of old age that is not all sleep, but is partly a dim revery. Jack watched him carefully until he was "off"—as Jack expressed it—and then he whispered softly to me.

"Great, ain't he? Wish you could have seen the fun when I started to take him in here. Nephew tried to make him believe he didn't want to come. Old man wouldn't have it. Said he thought a cigar would do him good. Nephew tried it again—I couldn't hear what he said. Then the old man got right up on his choker. His voice was just as sweet and mild as a May morning, but when he put the emphatics on, it sounded like a chunk of ice falling off a five-story building. 'Fred-er-ick,' says he, 'I am GOING into the SMOKING-CAR to have a little CONVERSATION with the grandson of my old FRIEND, Judge McMarsters. I will see you, Frederick, on my RETURN.' Frederick turned pale green, and sat down. He just muttered something about sending the valet with him in case he wanted anything. I waited until the Bishop had a move on him, and then I slipped back and tapped Nephew Fred on the shoulder. 'Look here,' says I, 'your man stays just where he is. *You* may not have had a father yourself, but *I* have.' You don't think I said too much, do you?"

"Oh, no, not at all," said I, "not in the least. He would have been quite justified in throwing you out of the car, that's all."

"That fellow?" said Jack, disdainfully; "why, he couldn't lift one side of me." And I gave it up.

"Now, you said," continued Jack, nodding toward the dozing Bishop, "that his head was going. 'Tisn't, though. It's nothing but old age. When a man gets to be as old as that, he talks a while and then he kind of loses his grip, just for a minute—see? All he needs is a little help. My old father was like that for the last six years of his life, and I learned how to manage him. When I saw he was likely to go to pieces, I just put my hand on him—*so*—quiet, but firm; and I whispered to him very low: 'Steady down, Governor, steady down—don't break!' Then he pulled himself right together; and if he thought nobody had noticed him he'd be just as straight as you or I. That's the way to handle them!"

I was wondering if this was the way he had "handled" Bishop Waldegrave, when the train began to slow down by a little variation on the series of jerks and bumps, and the negro brakeman put his head in the doorway and shouted:

"Ashe River Ferry!"

The Bishop still dozed—in fact, he was fast asleep now—too sound asleep to be awakened by the bump with which we finally stopped. Jack and I went to the door and looked out. We saw a forlorn place at the forlornest hour of a forlorn day. Even in full summer, Ashe River

Ferry could not have been an attractive town. Seen in the dim light of a late spring evening, it was a singularly depressing specimen of the shiftless and poverty-stricken little settlements that dot the waste spaces of the South—towns, if towns they may be called, that come into existence solely to supply the special needs of some little group of railroad operatives. A dozen hideously ugly frame houses, forty or fifty negro shanties, a few acres of wretched farm-land, sparsely bristled with dead corn-stalks, one to a hill; blackened stumps spotting great stretches of half-cleared land; thin, sickly pine-woods hemming in the horizon on three sides; on the fourth a broad, muddy, dreary river, swollen and turbulent from the spring freshets, with the same poor pine-woods on the other side, scratches of black against the one pale-yellow line that cleft the dull gray sky to the eastward. If one lived a hundred years at Ashe River Ferry, he could make no more of it than this.

Looking out on this unengaging prospect, I was surprised to see Jack's face suddenly light up with mirth, and to hear him break into a low, happy laugh. Then he touched my shoulder and pointed down the track.

"How's that for a joke on the nephew?" he said.

I looked down toward the river at the little ferry-slip, with its crazy piles and rusty chains. The ferry-boat, which was likewise crazy and rusty, could carry but one car at a time, and it had just started on its first trip with car No. 1 of our train. On the rear platform stood two figures—

the impassive English valet and Mr. Frederick Dillington, who was anything but impassive. We were too far away to hear what he was saying to the stolid deckhands below him, but there was not the slightest need of words to explain the situation, or to make us understand that Mr. Dillington was executing every variation in his power on the simple theme of "stop the boat!"—and that his solo was receiving choral responses of "it can't be done."

And it was not done. The ferry-boat puffed and wheezed on her way as well as she was able—and, indeed, nothing but the strange stupidity of selfishness could have blinded Mr. Dillington to the fact that, in such wild and rough water, the clumsy craft could ill afford to go one foot further than was absolutely needful.

Jack leaned forward with his hands on his knees, his face fairly wrinkled with merriment, and he crowed and chuckled with glee.

"Oh, I'd have given a hundred dollars for this!" he said. "And if that boat gets stuck on the other side, I make it five hundred."

"John," I said, "is not this one of the occasions when you are an idiot? What should we do if we were left with that old gentleman on our hands?"

"Why," said Jack, heartily and simply, "bless your soul, *I'd* take care of him! I'd give him a better time than he's had in twenty years, too; and don't you make a mistake."

That day, for sure, the gods were with Mr. John McMarsters. The ferry-boat did not get stuck on

the other side, to his deep disappointment, but she fulfilled his desire by a different method of procedure—she fixed things, as he remarked, in her own blooming, pig-headed way.

For, on her return trip, as she approached the shore, she ran well up the river to avoid being carried past her slip by the furious current, and, miscalculating her direction, came against the trembling old spiles with a force that wrecked nearly half one side of the slip, and smashed her own wheel-box into a tangle of kindling wood and twisted iron.

"Great Cæsar's Ghost!" shouted Jack, pounding his knees with delight, "she's done it, she's done it! Say! who do I pay that five hundred to? Do the niggers get it, or do I blow it in on the Bishop?"

I tried to point out some of the serious aspects of the case to Jack, but he would have none of my remonstrances.

"It's an elegant, gilt-edged lark," he said. "I'm game for it, and so are you, when you get through with your preaching. Eloping with a bishop! Holy *Moses!* Wait till I get back to New York and tell the boys!"

"But," said I, "it may be possible to get a boat across the river. I will go and inquire."

The veteran sport withered me with superior scorn.

"You may inquire, if you like," he said, "till your inquirer breaks, but *I* don't want any man to tell me he can get a boat across that river. Why, I

wouldn't take a ship's yawl out there. Man, it's half a flood!"

I did inquire, however, and was scorned and despised by every native to whom I addressed my inquiry; so we went back to the car to break the news to the Bishop, who was awake by this time.

At first he took it quite hard. He seemed to be distressed and apprehensive, and said, "Oh, dear, oh, dear!" over and over again, in a gentle, dismayed way.

Then Jack took it upon himself to address a brief philosophical discourse to the Bishop.

"Everything goes, Bishop," he said; "see? We've got to take things as they come, and if they come mixed, why we've got to take them that way. One day you play in luck; the next you ain't in it, but it all goes—see? If you're all right, that goes. If you get it in the neck, that goes too. That's the way I look at it. I don't know if I know, but that's the way I look at it. Everything goes. Is that right?"

"Unquestionably you are right, Mr. McMarsters," replied the Bishop, "and you do well to remind me of the transitoriness of the annoyances which humanity is too apt to exaggerate into afflictions. But you will pardon an old man's grumbling. Old men," he said, smiling, "are allowed to grumble a little. And I am sure I should be very thankful to have fallen into such good hands."

Then, as he rose from his seat and rested his hand on Jack's arm, he cast a wistful glance at one

and the other of our faces, and said, with a gentle dignity that honored us both:

"I am afraid, gentlemen, I may have to ask your indulgence for the infirmities of a very old man—a *very* old man."

We made the Bishop fairly comfortable in the station, and I stayed with him while Jack went in search of a suitable lodging. It seemed a hopeless task, and I began to feel the weight of the responsibility that rested upon our shoulders. But within half an hour Jack was back, smiling cheerfully.

"Did you find a hotel?" I asked, eagerly.

"Hotel!" said Jack, contemptuously "What place do you think this is, Paris or Saratoga? There ain't a hotel within ten miles. But there's a friend of mine keeps a little sporting place down by the river——"

"A friend of yours!" I exclaimed. "In this place?"

"Well, I just met him," Jack exclaimed, calmly, "about fifteen minutes ago. But he knows me—that is, he knew all about me. He lost two hundred once on a horse I owned. He's a first-rate fellow—see? and he'll take us all in and do for us in elegant shape."

"Heavens, Jack!" said I, "we can't take the Bishop to a place like that."

"Yes, we can," said Jack; "it's a first-rate place. Clean as a new pin. Regular old-fashioned sporting place. Nice old colored prints all round. Picture of Hiram Woodruff on one side

of the door, and Budd Doble driving Flora Temple on the other. My friend and his wife will turn out and give the Bishop their room, and you and I sleep behind the bar. If any of the boys drop in, he'll see that they're quiet, and there won't be any game to-night—see? Oh, you needn't think I don't know the right thing for a religious swell."

I had my misgivings, but it turned out that Jack had really done very well for us. "Magonigle's" was an absurd little old two-story box on the very edge of the river, evidently a house-of-call for boating and driving men. The whole building was scarcely more than twenty feet square, but the interior was neat and cosey, and the little room upstairs in which we installed the Bishop was simply a delightful little cabin, clean and sweet, and smelling of castile-soap and fresh linen. Magonigle himself was a hearty, kindly little Irishman, and Mrs. Magonigle a motherly, fresh-faced little body, as small for a woman as her husband was for a man. The supper she cooked was, as Jack said, a great deal too good for the Prince of Wales. It was certainly quite good enough for the Bishop. It was broiled spring chicken, fried potatoes, and hot bread, and I shall remember it while I have a palate. Nor shall I forget the India pale ale.

After supper Jack put his usual question to Magonigle:

"Say!" he demanded, "what is there to do in this town to-night? Now, don't give me any story about there being nothing. You know me. There's got to be something."

But Magonigle was firm in his assurances that there were absolutely no enjoyments to relieve the monotony of life in Ashe River Ferry.

"It's a dead place it is, sir. If we could get over the river I could show you gentlemen, axing his riverence's pardon, maybe a bit of a cock-fight, but on this side of the water there's nothing to see at all, and every man in the place will be at work the night long, mending the ferry-boat 'Tis different in the summer, sir; but in the winter time it's just dead, this town is."

"Magonigle," said Jack, imperatively, "turn up *something!*"

Magonigle looked doubtfully at Jack, then at the Bishop, then at me; and it was to me that he addressed himself.

"Well, sir," he said, "there's something what they call a revival meeting going on out in the woods. There do be some people takes an interest in such things. They're too sickly like for me, sir, with the women screaming, and having fits, like it might be, on the ground; but if ye'd like to see it I'd be proud to hitch up the old mare, and it's an easy ride for this part of the country, where the roads is the devil, if I may speak without disrespect for his riverence."

"Niggers?" inquired Jack.

"No, sir," replied Magonigle. "White folks, such as they are. I don't rightly remember what religion they call themselves; for it's no church they have here, only meetings like this three or four times in the twelvemonth, maybe."

Jack and I looked at each other. There were limits to even Jack's audacity. We both started as the Bishop's full, deep voice joined in the conversation.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I do not in the least wish to obtrude my society upon you. I feel that I have already given you much trouble; but, if it does not conflict with your arrangements for this evening, I should very much like to be one of your party. It has never been my fortune to be present at one of these gatherings, and it would deeply interest me to look on as a spectator. I do not feel that there can be any impropriety—and it is a form of worship of which I have heard much, and which I should like to see with my own eyes. But, of course, if your plans——" And he stopped.

"Why, Bishop," said Jack, "we'd sooner stay here than leave you out. Magonigle, hitch up that mare!"

It was eight o'clock when we climbed into what Magonigle called the carriage—a vehicle that was neither an express wagon nor a rockaway, but partook of the nature of both. On a road so rough that to our Northern understanding it was no road at all, we plunged into the shadowy, dreary depths of the pine-wood. The night was clearing, and through the ragged evergreens we could catch glimpses of a pale, wind-swept sky. The hot, moist, sickly smell of the pines and firs half choked us, the rough bumping of the wagon tired us and set our nerves on edge, and even Jack McMarsters had no stomach for talk.

We were all but dazed with weariness of mind and body, and with the smell of the resin-laden air, when suddenly a weird flicker of flaring torches played before our eyes, dancing slashes of yellow-orange slitting the deep gloom ahead of us, and dazzling our sleepy eyes.

Faintly there came to us across the wind, that whistled and wailed through the trees, the long-drawn-out notes of a mournful, old-fashioned hymn, a dismal tune that I knew in my boyhood. It was one of those sad, stern, denunciatory old hymns that to my memory still hold the very spirit of the dead New England Sabbath in the cheerless, hopeless melody. The singing ceased for an instant only; then there uprose a far greater volume of voices, tumbling over each other in a mad, rattling, jingling strain, a popular dance-hall air, shamelessly and grotesquely twisted into the form of a hymn. It was a harmless jigging tune enough, but linked to the words which we could now hear in the lulls of the wind, it sounded like a profane travesty.

"He's the Lily of the Valley, the bright and morning star,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul."

The Bishop turned to me with a look of troubled surprise.

"Did I catch the meaning of those words?" he asked; "or did my ears deceive me? I certainly thought——"

I tried to explain to the Bishop that camp-meet-

ing folk allowed themselves a certain freedom and familiarity in dealing with sacred subjects, which might be in bad taste, but certainly was not ill meant. But he checked me with a touch on my arm.

"Nay, nay," he said, in his old-fashioned manner, "do not misapprehend me. I had not meant to be uncharitable."

"Any tune goes with these people—see?" said Jack, "so long as it is snappy. That's 'The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane.' "

"Is it, indeed?" said the Bishop.

Magonigle led the way, and we followed him into the circle of wavering, smoking kerosene torches. At first the light dazzled our eyes, but after a few moments we could take note of the picture of gaunt, uncouth poverty around us.

We were in a little clearing of the woods where the stumps had been roughly levelled to serve as supports for heavy, rough-hewn planks, which were the seats. The straggly pines made a black belt around this rude amphitheatre. At the further end was a low platform of rough timber, where the leaders of the meeting sat. Here the smoky lamps were thickest, and they cast a yellow glare on a little patch of smooth ground that we could see had been trodden bare by many feet. Here stood one bench, separate from all the rest, which might have held a dozen people, but nobody sat there as we first saw it. Between two and three hundred people were scattered round among the other benches. They were all "poor whites,"

children of the wilderness, a class apart by themselves; and poverty, ignorance, and loneliness stared out of every sallow face. They all turned to look at us as we entered, but it was with a vacant, self-absorbed look, and then their eyes went back to the platform and the man who stood on it, or rather walked and leaped and staggered on it.

He was a man between forty and fifty years of age, with a straggling beard and long hair; tall, haggard, and hungry-looking, like the rest; but with a light of intelligence in his face and a consciousness of power in his bearing that set him above his auditors. He was accustomed to public speaking; his voice was harsh and unpleasant, but strong and clear, and in spite of its disagreeable quality it had certain curiously caressing and persuasive tones in it. We did not need to study the dumb, brute-like interest of the faces of his hearers to know that this man had laid a spell upon their dull spirits, and that he spoke to each one as if they stood hand-in-hand.

"Oh, my brethren," he cried, raising his long arms high in the air, and throwing his lank frame forward in convulsive excitement; "oh, my sisters, the hour is nigh at hand—the hour of grace—the hour of deliverance! For three days have we labored here, for three days have we sought and struggled and prayed for the blessing to come, and no answer has come. But now it's coming, it's coming, it's coming, sinners; I know it's coming! I feel it right here in my heart! Oh, glory, halle-

lujah! Call with me, all of you, for it's nigh at hand! Salvation's right over you, right by your side! It's touching you right now! Call with me! Oh, Glory! Glory! Glory!"

A few weak cries came up from the outer edges of the throng.

"That won't do," shouted the revivalist, waving his arms in the air and beating the platform with his feet, "that won't do! I want you all to shout with me! I want you to shout so that the Lord hears you! Now once more! Glory! Glory!"

"Glory!" thundered Jack McMarsters, next to me.

"Be quiet, you devil," I whispered, grasping him by the arm.

"Got to help them out," said Jack. "Glory! Glory!"

And as his big voice rang out upon the air the whole crowd followed him as if a sudden madness had seized them, and the torches flickered as one wild, deafening shout of "Glory! Glory! Glory!" rose up to the bleak sky.

The sweat poured down the preacher's face as he joined in the shout, quivering from head to foot.

"That's it!" he fairly yelled. "I knew it was coming! I knew it had to come! Now, who is the first to come forward? Who is the first to come to this bench? Who is the first to come to this throne of glory and be born again? Oh, don't wait, don't linger an instant, or the moment may be forever lost! Hell eternal or eternal life!

Who is the first? Who is the first to save a soul from eternal hell?"

He stretched his arms out as if he were feeling for something in space. Suddenly the long forefinger of his right hand pointed directly at a sickly looking woman on a near-by bench.

"Oh, my sister!" he cried out, "do you feel it? has it come to you? Are you the first on whom the Lord has descended? Come forward, come forward! Come to the seat of those who wait for for the Lord—come!"

The woman arose, and slowly and feebly, her eyes fixed on the face of the preacher, she came forward as one who had no power to resist.

"I knew it, I knew it!" the revivalist shouted. "Come forward, my sister, and when you have touched that blessed bench grace will come to you as your soul wrestles in agony. I can see it working. I can see the hand of the Lord upon you!"

The woman reached the bench as he spoke, and touched it with her thin, quivering hand, and a hysterical shriek, horrible to hear, burst from her. Every figure in the crowd behind her bent forward, and cries of "Glory! Glory!" rent the air. But none came from Jack this time, for the woman was lying on her back across the bench, her poor, thin form writhing and twisting, clasping and unclasping her hands until her nails tore the worn flesh.

I looked on with a shuddering sickness. My brain whirled. I could not make myself believe that it was real, that it was true, that I saw this thing going on before my eyes. Then I became

conscious of a sensation of acute physical pain, and, looking down, I saw that the Bishop had grasped my wrist, and that his strong fingers had closed on it in a grip that seemed to drive the flesh into the bone. I understood what that grasp meant when I looked at his face. He was pale as death, and the features were fixed in a sternness that struck cold to my heart.

And all this time the revivalist shouted to the sobbing, swaying crowd.

"Come," he cried, "come, all who would be saved from hell! Here is one who has the grace. Who will join her? Who will save his soul tonight? This is the only way, and this may be the only moment! Who comes forward for salvation?"

The Bishop was breathing heavily, with long, trembling breaths, but I noticed that his expression had changed. It was no longer stern. It was strange and sad, and his look was fixed on something far away—far beyond the blackness of the black woods behind the madman who shrieked upon the platform. I felt a sudden fear, and turned toward Jack.

He was not by my side. I looked round and saw him at the rail that enclosed the clearing. He was placing a white-faced child in a woman's arms, and I saw by his gestures that he was forcing her to leave that place of horror. In a moment he was back, and, with one glance at me, he sat down on the other side of the Bishop and laid his steady hand on the old man's arm.

"Come!" screamed the man on the platform. "Come and choose between the Lord and hell! Every soul here is hanging over the fires of hell eternal. Come and be saved!"

But already, on the bench, under it, and on all sides of it lay a score of struggling, agonized human beings, beating the ground, tearing their very flesh in the exaltation of fear and frenzy, choking, gasping; and through it all, shrieking mad and awful appeals to the Most High; while the crowd around them, all on their feet, shouted and yelled in incoherent delirium

"Come! come!" the voice on the platform rose above the din. "Be saved while there is yet time."

"ALMIGHTY GOD——"

My heart stood still. The Bishop had risen to his feet, and his gigantic figure towered up as he spread out his hands above the crowd; and, as his deep tones rang out clear and dominant in that hideous Babel, a sudden silence fell upon them all.

"——THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO DESIRETH NOT THE DEATH OF A SINNER, BUT RATHER THAT HE MAY TURN FROM HIS WICKEDNESS AND LIVE, HATH GIVEN POWER, AND COMMANDMENT, TO HIS MINISTERS, TO DECLARE AND PRONOUNCE TO HIS PEOPLE, BEING PENITENT, THE ABSOLUTION AND REMISSION OF THEIR SINS. HE PARDONETH AND ABSOLVETH ALL THOSE WHO TRULY REPENT, AND UNFEIGNEDLY BELIEVE HIS HOLY GOSPEL."

The madness had gone—utterly gone—out of that stricken throng. The struggling figures

around the bench ceased to struggle. They raised their heads as they lay upon the ground, and every face in the clearing was turned toward the Bishop, wearing a look of eager wonderment which I shall never forget. The Bishop, his eyes still far away, his hands stretched out over the people, went on:

"——WHEREFORE LET US BESEECH HIM TO GRANT US TRUE REPENTANCE, AND HIS HOLY SPIRIT, THAT THOSE THINGS MAY PLEASE HIM WHICH WE DO AT THIS PRESENT; AND THAT THE REST OF OUR LIFE HEREAFTER MAY BE PURE AND HOLY; SO THAT AT THE LAST WE MAY COME TO HIS ETERNAL JOY; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD."

And the people answered, "Amen."

When he had finished he steadied himself by my shoulder, at first with a nervous pressure; but in a moment I felt the tension of his muscles relax. Then, in a voice that was almost feeble, so tender had it grown, he turned toward the East, and, in that abiding silence, he pronounced the Benediction.

For a moment, until they began to disperse softly and silently, the Bishop stood erect, then he sank back into his seat, with one arm around my neck and one around Jack's.

CRAZY WIFE'S SHIP

"I CAN'T see for the rain. Who—that there going up the hill? Why, I thought you knew most everybody on the island by this time! I'd have thought you'd known *her,* anyway. Why, that's old Mis' Bint—the aunt of all that tribe of Bints that live just near Calais. No, Mr. Woglom, that isn't the least bit what I was looking for. That isn't pa'm leaf—anyway, not what we used to call pa'm leaf. Why, now, it's strange you don't know Mis' Bint—and you so well acquainted around here too. Why, you had ought to write her up in some of your papers—hadn't he, Mr. Woglom? It's quite some of a story, if only anybody knew how to fix it up the right way, sost it would go in the newspapers. Why, I should have thought you'd have remarked her mourning!"

I could not help remarking her mourning now, at all events. I watched her struggling up the bleak island hillside, passing in and out of sight among the scraggly pines; and such a grimly fantastic figure, so swathed and swaddled and hung about and decked on with crape and stiff old-fashioned black stuffs, I had never before seen. Her veil projected on each side of her head as though her big old-fashioned bonnet were rigged out with

stun-sail booms. The wind buffeted her; the rain drenched her in angry little spats, first to starboard and then to port, but she tacked steadily on up the hill, with all her voluminous garments flapping bravely, as stiff and black as sheet-iron. I was watching her through the one clear pane in the window of Mr. Woglom's general store. Tarpaulins, rubber boots, sou'westers, fishing-tackle, scap-nets, school-books, suspenders, overalls, garden tools, horse medicine, mosquito-netting, lanterns, and other general-store stock, including the accursed lottery ticket, which is for sale in Maine everywhere where anything is sold, filled up the rest of the window. I was waiting for the squall to blow over. Miss Cynthiana Lovejoy, who accommodated me with board and lodging during my stay on the island, had happened in and was casually examining the new invoice of calicoes from New York, in search, Mr. Woglom confidentially told me, of a pattern which she had wanted for at least a generation, and which had been two generations out of the market.

"Now what year was it, do you remember, Mr. Woglom, when Obed Bint's ship was lost in that gale when the big whale come ashore? No, I don't mean Isaac Bint; I mean Obed Bint, Isaac's son—the young man—that is, he wouldn't be so dreadfully young to-day if he'd lived—most fifty now, I should think. Mr. Woglom, that ain't any more pa'm leaf that I'm pa'm leaf.

"Sixty-seven? Well, now, I wouldn't have thought it was so far back as sixty-seven. Land's

sake, how time does go! Yes, that's something like the pattern, but 'tisn't just *it*. Only I can't draw at all, I could draw that pattern for you just as clear as day. Well, now, it doesn't seem so long. But I guess you're right, Mr. Woglom. That was just the year that I bought the first piece of magenta poplin I ever saw, off your father. My, I thought I was made! Father, he used to call it my whale dress, because he paid for it out of the money he made off that whale. It came ashore right on his beach.

"That was a real bad storm, Mr. Woglom, if you recollect. Let me see—there was Obed Bint's boat, and Plum Davis's boat, and the two Daw brothers, their boat, and that man who lived on Three Acre Island, what was his name, now?—oh, yes, Wilkinson—well, there was his boat, too; not a one of them came back. Every one of those boats was lost in that gale. At least, not a one of them ever came in. Awful, wa'n't it?

"Well, now, what I was going to tell you about Mis' Bint that was so queer was just this, and I thought you might make sort of a story of it, if you could only fix it up some way sost it would read well. It was this way. Obed, he married just before he made his first trip on his own boat—married a girl he met at Eastport the year he went over there to go to a dancing-school they had there —'twa'n't much of a concern, I guess, but it was the best they was. She was a real nice little thing, and pretty too, and clever to everybody. She made friends with lots of people. I remember it

was real gay on the island that year; there was two or three other young married couples too.

"Well, as I was telling you, that big whale—my! he was a monstrous big thing!—that whale came up on our beach the same gale Obed Bint's boat was lost in. And of course we had to attend to the whale right off, and cut him up before he'd spoil, and—I don't know—but it took quite some time, and in consequence we didn't get over to see Mis' Bint as much as we had ought to; 'twa'n't that we didn't want to; but there was the whale, don't you see?

"Dear me, Mr. Woglom, I can remember that magenta dress just the same as if it was yesterday! I remember how I bought it off your father on this very counter. I remember just what he says when he sold it to me. Says he, 'You'll look just like that piny bed up to Widow Pierson's when you get that on,' says he. Why, it wa'n't no more like the color of pinies than nothing at all. Your father hadn't what folks call an eye for color, Mr. Woglom.

"Now, what *was* I saying? Oh yes! I know! I had that magenta dress on the first day that I ever looked across the cove from my father's house to the meadow lot under the light-house, and saw Mis' Bint and Obed's wife setting there looking out to sea as if they's expecting something. My great-grandmother, my father's grandmother, that is, she was alive then, and she was a real queer old lady. She'd sit in an old splint-bottomed chair by the chimney all day long and never say a word

—only set bolt-upright and smoke an old corn-cob pipe just like a man. I don't know what made me speak to her when I saw Mis' Bint and Obed's wife settin' there under the light-house, but I did, somehow. Says I, 'Granny, there's Mis' Bint and Obed's wife under the light-house looking out to sea. What do you think they're looking for?' says I.

"'Crazy wife's ship,' says she, short, just like that, and she didn't say another thing that day. That was a way she had; she didn't often say anything, but when she did say something she was real curious.

"I don't know whether it was an old-fashioned saying or something she made up herself, but it gave me a real sort of a turn. And that afternoon I went over to Mis' Bint's, that is, my mother and I did. They lived quite a piece away on the other side of the cove, but our two families had always been first-rate friends, and my father had taught Obed Bint all he knew about navigation. Well, you may imagine it took us all aback when old Mis' Bint met us at the gate, and we saw right away that she wa'n't going to let us in. That was the first time I ever saw or heard of neighbors quarrelling on the island—I've seen enough since, but I was only a young slip of a girl then, and it did seem perfectly dreadful to me. Mis' Bint she talked—oh, she talked quite violently, and reproached us for not coming sooner, and as much as said she wanted to have done with us for good and all. My mother—she was a very proud woman—

she never answered her back at all, but she just took me by the hand and told me to come along, and we started for home. I didn't dare say anything; I was most too frightened to speak. And mother she didn't say a word, but just walked right on leading me by the hand as if I was a baby.

"Going back we met old Mr. Starbuck, the one who used to live in the red house down by the Point. He was about the only near neighbor the Bints had—between 'em I guess they owned pretty much all that end of the island.

" 'Hello!' says he, when he saw my mother. 'Been to call on me?'

" 'What do you mean, Mr. Starbuck?' says my mother, for she didn't know what to make of his asking such a question.

" 'Why,' he says, 'I supposed you'd been to my house. I understand folks ain't admitted anywheres else in this neighborhood.'

"We didn't understand him just then, but we did when we got to the village and heard the talk that was going on. You never heard anything so queer in all your life. It was a real nine-days' wonder, as the saying is. It seemed that old Mis' Bint had picked a quarrel with everybody on the island, on one pretext or another, so that there wa'n't one that she hadn't, so to speak, shut her doors on. Dreadful queer behavior! With one it was one thing and with another it was something different, but it all come to pretty much the same in the end—she wa'n't on speaking terms with hardly a soul in the place, and there she was,

living up on the Point with not a neighbor to go near her, mewed up all alone there with Melindy—that was Obed's wife's name. Everybody was sorry for the poor little clever creature, for Mis' Bint wa'n't a cheerful woman the best of times, and when she *was* vexed, *my!* she was vexed.

"But then, of course, we couldn't do anything, she kept Melindy so close—wouldn't let her stir anywheres without her, and it got so at last that she wouldn't hardly let her go out at all.

"Of course we all made out that the loss of her son had turned her mind, and people was all the more sorry for Melindy on that account. She pined away dreadfully too; lost all her good looks, and got real peaked.

"For one thing, her mother-in-law would never let her wear mourning, nor Mis' Bint wouldn't wear a stitch of black herself. That's what made folks say she was crazy first off; for though there's lots of people here who won't wear mourning clothes on principle, old Mis' Bint come from Calais, and she was a Bint by birth, too, before she married Isaac Bint; and all those Bints, the whole stock of them, were just *sot* on dressing all out in black, every cousin that died. She was real particular about her dress, Mis' Bint was. I think folks was generally more particular in those days. I know there ain't any patterns nowadays like that old pa'm-leaf pattern; not so nice, that is, to my taste.

"Of course Mis' Bint didn't drop out like that without being considerable missed. Melindy was

kind of new to the town, but her mother-in-law was a good deal looked up to. She was a great housekeeper for one thing, and when there was anything going on—I mean sociably—weddings and funerals, for instance, people always use to a sort of depend on Mis' Bint. And then she was a masterhand at nursing sick folks and taking care of young children, and altogether people missed her —quite some. Mr. Woglom, if you can't show me those dress goods yourself, don't bother to put that boy of yours at it, for you just might as well not. I don't believe he knows gingham from goose grease.

"Let me see, I guess it must have been two-three years, maybe four, that I found out the rights of the matter, and just accidentally, as you might say. The light-house I was telling you about was away at the far end of the Point, and nobody hardly ever went there, except, of course, the man who kept the light and he was a Portugee or something—some kind of a foreigner, anyway, and didn't talk much English. But ever since she began to act so queer, old Mis' Bint had made a regular practice of going down there and setting with her daughter-in-law—oh, my, for hours at a time, and every day, too, in all sorts of weather. I don't believe anybody knew about it, though, except our folks, for you could see them where they sat from our kitchen window, but not from much of any place else. And as for my mother, from the day old Mis' Bint spoke sharp to her to the day of her death, she never mentioned the

name of Bint, and you may believe I wouldn't have dared to mention it to *her*. The way it happened was this, and it was kind of funny. I had a little green parrot about *that* long. A sailor uncle of mine brought it to me from Java, somewheres in the tropics—my Uncle Hiram, one of my mother's folks; he died young, and I guess there ain't anybody remembers him now, without it's me, and I don't believe I'd ever think of him if it wa'n't for that parrot. It was a cute little thing, and I set a heap by it, though it couldn't talk, and it was dreadful mis*chie*vous. It died, in the end, of swallowing a needle-book. Well, as I was saying, that bird got loose one awful bleak day in November, and ran right along the shore of the cove, and made straight to Bint's place, and me after it, you'd better believe, running just as hard as I could tear. And you wouldn't have thought a little thing could get over such a lot of ground so amazing fast. It was clean over in Mis' Bint's cow-pasture before I caught it, and then I started for home real frightened, for I didn't know what my mother would say to me if she ever knew I'd been anywheres on land belonging to the Bints. She was dreadful strict sometimes, my mother was.

"Well, just by good luck, nobody saw me, and I come back by the short-cut across the Point under the light-house. And would you believe it, just as I got under that sand bank there with the swallows' nests in it—you can see 'em from here—that dratted parrot got away from me again; and I was

so tuckered out what with the running and the fright and the disappointment and all that—it sounds kinder foolish now, don't it?——I just laid right down there on the sand and cried as if I was going to cry my eyes out.

"And while I was lying there and crying fit to break my heart, the first thing I knew I heard people's voices talking on the bank above me. I couldn't see them, and at first I thought it was some of our folks come after me, and I was worse scared than ever, and I just laid quiet, not knowing what *to* do. Then I recognized Mis' Bint's voice and Melindy's, though, as I say, I hadn't spoken a word to either of them in three-four years, but you may fancy it sent a real cold chill down my back when I heard old Mis' Bint say, in a perfectly peaceful, ca'm, natural way, just as I am talking to you now:

" 'No, dearie; Obed can't get in on that wind. He'll most likely lay to on t'other side of South Island, and come up with the tide in the morning.'

" 'But he'll come in the morning sure, won't he, ma?' says Melindy; and it gave me an awful funny, creepy feeling to hear her, for she talked a sort of innocent, something like a little child.

" 'Oh yes,' says old Mis' Bint. 'Obed will come in the morning sure. You'd better be thinking of getting a good breakfast for him.'

" 'Yes,' says Melindy; 'picked-up codfish. Obed always was great for picked-up codfish.'

"Well, if I was scared before, I was scared worse than ever now. Why, it was just the

unnaturalist thing that you ever could form a notion of, setting there and hearing those two women talking about getting breakfast for a man who had been lying four years at the bottom of the sea. It 'most made my blood run cold; but of course I didn't dare to stir, and I just *had* to set there and listen while they laid out the breakfast they was going to get ready for him—picked-up codfish and mock mince-pie and I don't know what all. And then they talked about how soon he'd be rested enough to feel like taking a journey up the river to Bucksport to pay a visit to his Uncle John. My! his Uncle John 'd been dead two years.

"I don't know what it was I did at last that attracted their attention. I guess I must have coughed or something, because Mis' Bint she called out suddenly, 'What's that?' and looked over the sand bank and saw me. I wasn't so scared then but what I got straight up and started to run. But Mis' Bint she just came down and caught me by the arm, and walked me quite a ways down the beach before she said a word. Then she talked right close to my ear sost I could hear her, but Melindy couldn't.

" 'You think I'm a lunatic,' she says.

" 'Yes, ma'am,' I says. I didn't know what to say, but I was a real truthful child.

" 'Well, I ain't,' says Mis' Bint. 'I'm as sane as you are. But *she's* an idiot, and she's been so ever since the night of the big gale; and I've kep' up the delusion in her mind that Obed's coming

home,' says she. 'I've encouraged her in it, because if I didn't she wouldn't live a week.'

Then she looked at me real hard for a minute, and then she said:

"'That's why I don't want folks around. You're John Lovejoy's daughter, ain't you?' says she.

"'Yes, ma'am,' says I.

"'Well,' says she, 'you've seen the affliction the Lord's visited upon me. Now what you going to do? Tell folks?'

"Then I spunked up. I guess she knew I would. 'Mis Bint,' says I, 'I guess our folks ain't meddled with your affairs very lately, and I don't think,' says I, 'that we're going to begin now,' I told her. And with that I walked away. I was real mad.

"And do you know, it was the funniest thing. I hadn't gone more than a hundred yards when what should I see but that parrot a-hopping along in front of me, heading for home across the sand. He was dreadful little, but I could see him a long ways off; he was such a bright green against the beach, and the day was kinder gray too, sost he showed up quite some. It was a green something like that pattern, Mr. Woglom, but with more yellow into it.

"And I never did say one word about it for the longest time. But maybe three-four years after that Melindy fell kind of sick, and they had to send for a doctor, and then somehow it all came out. But it didn't do any harm, I guess, for Melindy wa'n't sick long. She died that January, and the

first boat that got through the ice to the mainland that spring old Mis' Bint went over on it to Eastport, and when she come back she had the greatest lot of mourning clothes that I guess most any woman ever had. She's taken some of it off since then, and they don't wear skirts so full now, so you don't notice it so much, but still she wears considerable—enough to notice, I should think. But they do say she's a great deal more sociable now—though, my! I don't know. *I* ain't spoken to her since.

"No, Mr. Woglom," concluded Miss Cynthiana, as she felt the edge of the last piece of calico between her thumb and her forefinger, "you needn't trouble yourself to show me anything more. I don't believe you've got the real pa'm leaf anyway. Though I was in hopes you might have had it, you've talked so much of getting it for me so many times. Does Mis' Bint buy her mourning of you now, or does she still go to Eastport for it? But wa'n't it curious, my finding that parrot again that way?"

Between the legs of a pendent pair of wading boots I peered out of the dripping window, looking at the crest of the storm-swept hill, and caught a last glimpse of the gaunt black figure tacking against the wind. funereal and lonely.

FRENCH FOR A FORTNIGHT

"OH, dear!" said the Reverend Mr. Pentagon. "Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" Then he tossed uneasily upon his neat white bed, and ground his broad shoulders into its snowy depths. He looked out of the window, and saw, through the pale green panes of flint glass a bough of darker green bob up and down, shaking off great drops of rain as the last gust of the summer rainstorm agitated it and gently subsided. Beyond, the gray sky, that had but now been weeping, was slowly growing blue; not smiling yet, but tearfully clearing up to tranquil brightness. To people not in an unpleasant frame of mind it might have suggested the face of a child coming out of a crying spell. To the Reverend Mr. Pentagon, who was in a very unpleasant frame of mind, it suggested nothing beyond the fact that he had to wait before he could walk out under the blue sky. He stared and tossed, and stared and tossed again, and once more he said, explosively:

"Oh, dear!"

If the Recording Angel sets down our words according to what they mean to our hearts rather than by their dictionary meaning, he credited the Reverend Mr. Pentagon's account with a right, good, healthy bit of profanity on the score of that

last "Oh, dear!" And, indeed, if he had said some awful thing with "Damn" in it, he could not have meant anything worse. For the Reverend Mr. Pentagon was lying in bed and thinking of the days that had dropped out of his life during a long period of unconsciousness and delirium.

"Fifteen days," he said to himself. "Fifteen days! Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!"

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The Rev. Mr. Pentagon was a clergyman of culture and understanding, who, writing and preaching from a small provincial city in Massachusetts, had made a name for himself all over the country, and indeed wherever the old Church of England points its spires toward the sky, or drops earthward the clangor of its square belfries. So great had grown his fame that when he gave up the charge he had held for fifteen years, being forced thereto by ill health, and, going into the Canada woods, was, in the course of one summer, recovered of fifteen years of dyspepsia, why, it so happened that this modest provincial parson found himself given to understand that if a certain series of sermons which he was invited to deliver in New York should please the congregation to whom they were addressed, he would in all probability be called to fill the pulpit of one of the great city's fashionable churches. It was a very old, a very rich, a very exclusive church. The old Rector was about to resign by reason of his age; not wholly to the regret of certain members of his congrega-

tion, who found that in the years of his stewardship the dear old gentleman had "slowly broadened down from precedent to precedent" until he was almost as broad and charitable as the New Testament itself. So, naturally, they wanted a man who, if he had to broaden down, would start from a higher plane of orthodoxy, and such a man they were sure they had found in the Reverend Mr. Pentagon.

So, too, Mr. Pentagon thought, and he came down from the Canada woods, and in a pretty little town among the rocks of the Maine coast set himself to write his series of sermons. There were to be six in the series, but I know the heads of only three of them. The first was "On the Reciprocal Duties of the Church and the Pastor." The second was "On the Duty of Church-going." The third was entitled, "On the Duty of a Strict Observance of the Sabbath."

It was while he was writing this sermon that the Reverend Mr. Pentagon chanced to ask himself whether it would not be well for the rector of a New York church to know something about New York. He had had enough acquaintance with Boston, which he considered a large city, to grasp the idea that large cities have ways of their own which they are not at all inclined to change at the pleasure of the casual stranger. Moreover, Mr. Pentagon was a man whose native habit of mind was liberal enough, and he happened to be free from the usual intolerant provincial hatred of big cities. And he made up his mind that he would go at once, all by

himself, to see what New York was like. He had been in New York, of course, but only to stay for a few days at a boarding house with a delegation of his own townspeople at the time of a great convention of the Church.

He knew that New York was almost intolerably hot in summer-time, and so he conceived for himself the notion of a resting-place in the suburbs, from whence he could make brief incursions into the body of the town, coming back at night to the green fields and fresh air. He consulted with his brother of the local church, a Portland man who had been in New York in 1874, who gave him just the address he wanted—a nice, quiet little place in Westchester County, on the Bronx River, where he could board most comfortably at next to nothing.

Clergymen are wonderfully like sheep in many things. The Reverend Mr. Pentagon packed a large old-fashioned travelling bag—*of course*—and set out for the nice place on the Bronx River. He found it readily enough, for there was only one other house within five miles. It had been an excellent house, but it was now getting along without doors or windows, in a sad and paintless old age. The family that had entertained his clerical friend so hospitably in the year 1874, had moved out in the year 1875, and the house had had no tenant since. This much he learned of the man of the other house, who was a fat and kindly French tavern-keeper, with the reddest of faces and the whitest of aprons, and an amount of polite-

ness that made the Reverend Mr. Pentagon feel more awkward than he had felt since he was a little boy at school and got up on the platform to speak his little piece just as the four awful school inspectors dropped in on a sudden visit of inspection. On that occasion, he remembered, his little bare legs felt as if they had ten joints in each one of them, and he certainly had fourteen fingers on each hand.

As awkward as a child and as lonely as a lost child, the Reverend Mr. Pentagon stood in front of the house of Monsieur Perot and stared blankly at the inn and at the landlord until an idea slowly crept into his mind. The inn looked very clean and neat. It was an odd little old-fashioned structure with green palings and trellises stuck about it in various places, and it overhung the margin of the placid Bronx and mirrored its whitewashed front in the calm stream. The landlord's face inspired confidence—so, too, did a smell of crisp, clean cooking that came from the kitchen of Madame Perot. Why might not the Reverend Mr. Pentagon take lodgings at the inn of Monsieur Perot? There was no reason why he might not, and in the end he did.

Very comfortable he found himself, and very friendly were the *famille Perot;* and a multitudinous family they were. Mr. Pentagon never succeeded in taking the census of them all, which need not be wondered at when it is said that the eleventh infant of Monsieur and Madame Perot was exactly of the same age as the third child of

their first married daughter. And all of them, of every age and size, were polite by birth and inheritance, and took a cheerful view of life.

The first day of his arrival, which was a Saturday, Mr. Pentagon took out his unfinished sermon, meaning to set to work. Then he read it over, and it struck him that really it was so very strong, especially the passage in denunciation of the Continental Sabbath, that he really ought to wait until he found himself in just the proper spirit to go on with it. He had a feeling of chastened pride in the thought that he had denounced that sinful Continental Sabbath very aptly indeed for a man who had never seen it. So that day he went for a walk and saw some of the pretty places which are too near to New York for most New Yorkers to visit. The next day was Sunday, and he went into the City and worshipped at Trinity, and on his way home went out of his course to view the great church to which he expected to be called, and stood and looked at its closed doors; and his heart beat hard.

On Monday he went to New York again, and again on Tuesday, and again on Wednesday, and again on Thursday. Hither and thither he wandered, bewildered at first, then fascinated. The cosmopolitan variety of the life amazed and interested him. He had a slight book-knowledge of several languages, and in his ramblings he heard them all and many that he could not recognize. On Friday he stumbled on the Polish quarter in Attorney Street and thereabouts, and then,

strolling aimlessly on, got into Mulberry Bend and was suddenly seized with a nervous fright at the swarming vastness of that mighty ant-hill. He gazed about him at the countless foreign faces that streamed this way and that through the narrow pass; he blinked at the marvellous street-stands with their wild confusion of reds and greens and whites; he looked up at the thin strip of blue sky between the tops of the towering tenements; and then his eye fell upon the huge form of the Irish policeman who sauntered grandly through all this bustle and turmoil of agile Italians, and he said to him:

"Do you think that any of these people would offer me violence if I were to proceed farther along this street?"

The policeman looked down at him kindly, but from an infinite height of scorn.

"An' ME here?" he said.

Mr. Pentagon went on unmolested, and before he had reached the end of the street he had some glimmering realization of the fact that it was not only the big policeman who was keeping order for him, but the spirit of good-natured, happy, all expectant industry that is the salvation of the poor whose feet are on the road that may lead to prosperity if they will but keep to it. But not then, not till long, long afterward, did Mr. Pentagon learn the awful difference between the hopeful and the hopeless poor.

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Friday found the Reverend Mr. Pentagon tired

and footsore, with not one word added to the sermon "On the Duty of a Strict Observance of the Sabbath." Then, having lain on his lounge all day Friday, of course he needed a little exercise on Saturday. He thought he would take a row. He had rowed at college, and once or twice on the broad river that ran by the town that had been his home for fifteen years.

But he had never rowed on the Bronx, and the Bronx is a river that requires a special education for its navigation. It winds, it twists, it turns, it doubles upon itself, it spreads out into a pond, it contracts to a mere thread of water; in fact it is the most capricious and absurd little water-course on the face of the civilized globe.

And so it happened that Mr. Pentagon, coming around a turn with an unnecessarily powerful stroke, and with his body thrown back, ran into a stone bridge, struck his head full on the spring of the arch, and went backward into his boat, unconscious of everything in this world, save a dim sense of grinding pain, and of alternate heat and chill.

After this came a long period when he had a certain fitful knowledge of things and people about him. He saw faces—the faces of the elder members of the Perot family, the red good-natured face of Monsieur Perot, the kindly withered face of his old wife, the sweet and pretty face of the married daughter; now and then wondering faces of children looking in at the doorway, and at certain regular intervals a man's face, grave and gentle,

with searching eyes that were somehow connected in his mind with the word "Doctor."

Then came the time when he awoke to know that he had been sick nigh unto death, and out of his head, and out of this world more or less, for a period of days. When he asked how many, the Doctor answered him evasively, and he fretted over the evasion with all the futile insistence of a convalescent. He could learn nothing from Madame Perot, who could have made a professional cross-examiner change any given subject for any other one he did not want. But at last he caught Monsieur Perot and bullied him into an admission. Perot would not absolutely defy the Doctor's orders, but in the end, being in an agony of perspiration and trepidation, he told Mr. Pentagon that he might calculate the rest for himself; it was now fifteen days since the reverend gentleman had honored the house with his presence.

"Quinze jours," said the Reverend Mr. Pentagon to himself, "Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday"—and he went on counting on his fingers. "Why, to-day must be Sunday!"

Even as he spoke a church bell tinkled faintly in the distance. It tinkled long enough to remind the Reverend Mr. Pentagon that instead of scolding at the week that lay before him, it behooved him to thank the Lord for his deliverance, and he accordingly did so, without the aid of his Book of Common Prayer; for his injury had somewhat

endangered his eyesight, and he was absolutely forbidden to read.

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Mr. Pentagon was a strong, healthy, temperate man; and he made a most rapid recovery. To be more exact it was soon to be seen that his case would have no *sequelæ*, as the good, grave Doctor loved to call the secondary consequences of an ailment. Instead of a week, he was kept but a day longer in bed and two days in his room, and after that he was allowed to wander the whole day long under Monsieur Perot's cherry-trees, or to sun himself on the little veranda overlooking the stream. He could not read, which tried him a little, but his young friends of the innumerable tribe of Perot made life bearable, in fact, delightful for him. His French, what there was of it, was of what might be called the passive sort; and he understood perhaps one word in three of what the elder Perots said to him. But the children, as is often the case with Franco-American youngsters, spoke two languages with equal fluency and incorrectness, and moreover combined the two as they saw fit. Thus Mr. Pentagon conversed with them in a sort of Pigeon-English, or lingua franca, after this fashion:

Mr. Pentagon.—Kee ay ploorong, Mahree?

Marie Angelique Eulalie Rose Étienne Perot (*aged seven*).—Mais, m'sieu, c'est Toto qui pleure,

parce qu'il a tveesté la tail à la chatte, et puis papa lui a fetchée des gifles.

That's what the beautiful language of France comes to on the banks of the winding Bronx.

. . . . . .

Mr. Pentagon had never married, he had no near kin, and he was not in the habit of keeping up close correspondence with even the best of his friends. But when he awoke on the third morning of his convalescence as an *externe,* he reflected that he must very soon find some way of notifying those who cared for him of his present condition and whereabouts. He thought he would ask the Doctor, who still came to see him once a day, if he would not write the requisite letters for him. The Doctor was a serious man, his face was almost sad in its thoughtfulness, and he was chary of speech to the verge of taciturnity; but there was an earnest kindliness in his thoughtful eyes which made Mr. Pentagon feel sure that he would write the letters, and would write them well.

Much cheered by this conclusion he finished his dressing and was about to start downstairs, when the door opened and he beheld Monsieur Perot, in gorgeous attire, with a large tri-colored bouquet in his buttonhole; Madame Perot in her very best dress with a marvellous and complicated white cap on her gray head, and the married daughter, with her husband, both costumed in the most advanced art of the Bowery. Behind them,

like the incidental cherubs with which the Old Masters used to fill up the odd corners of their canvases, surged a selected group of small Perots, the girls all in white dresses with big sashes, and the boys all in white shirts with tri-colored neckties.

There was a flood, a deluge, an explosion of French, and after Mr. Pentagon had struggled with it for some time, and had been helped out by the younger members of the delegation, he got it through his head that he was invited to join the Perot family at the Summer Festival of the French Society to which they belonged, this festival being a combined fête and pique-nique at Tompkinson's Summer-Garden Park, a paradise of unspeakable delights situated in the immediate neighborhood.

It would have been impossible for Mr. Pentagon to refuse, if he had wished to refuse, which he did not in the least.

"I ought to see about the letters," he reflected; "but then, this being Saturday, they could not go until Monday, and I need miss only a single mail. And really I must not lose this opportunity of seeing what a French Festival is like."

Three country stages of vast age and of unlimited capacity transported the Perot family through clouds of dust to Mr. Tompkinson's Garden, which was shut off from the rest of the world by a high yellow fence. Through a gateway decked with the fluttering flags of all nations and of several defunct yacht-clubs, the party was

whirled, in such a tumult of joyous shouting and shrieking as Mr. Pentagon had never in his life heard before. His head whirled with it, and it was with the sense of being in a dream that he found himself seated at a table under a tree, drinking a milky sweet stuff called orgeat, and by the aid of a spoon sharing his beverage with a warm and sticky little Perot, who had perched on his left knee. In front of them a company of eleven amateur soldiers, attired in uniforms that would have made Solomon in all his glory look like a Quaker, performed evolutions of a mysterious and rapid nature, looking extremely fierce all the while, and thumping the butts of their guns on the ground every now and then, with a snort of defiance. This done, they mopped their hot faces, accepted the congratulations of the Perot family with smiling satisfaction, took off their hats and bowed in the politest way, and went off somewhere else to do it again.

In every direction somebody was doing something. The "Park" was a poor bare place, with dusty trees, and dry and faded grass, and the little booths that lined its yellow walls were old and weatherbeaten, and their sparse decorations of red, white and blue bunting were pitifully faded with sun and rain. But the people made it gay—the swarms of happy holidaying folk, some of them in quaint, old-world costumes, some of them in brilliant uniforms of designs that would have looked equally strange on either side of the water—all of them wearing hot and smiling faces. Mr. Penta-

gon opened his eyes wide to take in the unaccustomed scene. The women's caps were wonderful to him; so were the waistcoats of the men. As to the various sports and games, he had never dreamed that there were so many ways of amusing oneself in the world. There were shooting-galleries, and merry-go-rounds, and "Aunt Sallies," and the tiniest little switch-back railway, which was labelled in letters as big as itself, "*Aux Montagnes Russes.*" And in every little open space of the extensive grounds there was a club or a society, or a league, or a group, or some other aggregation of from six to a dozen young men, practising some athletic sports with infinite perspiration and ardor. The fencers fenced, the strong men lifted their heavy weights, the military companies drilled, the athletes tumbled and twisted, and climbed, and ran, and turned handsprings; and the sportsmen and sharp-shooters shot, and shot, and shot, till their popping fairly peppered the general hum and buzz as if the place were undergoing a miniature bombardment.

And when nature needed refreshment or stimulus, one bottle of thin blue wine sufficed for the needs of any six of the participants; some of them, more ascetic, indeed, preferred lemonade, and shunned the wine-cup.

Before long Mr. Pentagon found himself in the very thick of it. He was introduced to everybody, and everybody made him welcome. As an American, he was regarded as a prime authority upon "*le sport,*" and he was called upon to act as

umpire and referee in all manner of contests, most of them wholly strange to him. His umpiring must have been fearful and wonderful; but as the wildest of his decisions gave perfect satisfaction to everybody concerned, he was none the wiser. Then he got so interested that he began to take a hand in some of the milder sports, and with his hat on the back of his head, and his clerical necktie twisted around under one ear, he showed what an able-bodied American clergyman can do when he puts his whole mind on the noble game of ring-toss. And when Madame Perot came to tell him it was time to go home, she found him hand in hand with a string of little Perots and their playmates, capering clumsily but cheerfully to the tune of

"Sur le pont d'Avignon,
Tout le monde y danse, danse,
Sur le pont d'Avignon,
Tout le monde y danse en rond."

As he approached the gate, weary but happy, he met the Doctor, who bore in his face a look more bright and more kindly (if that could be) than Mr. Pentagon had ever seen there before. The Doctor shook Mr. Pentagon warmly by the hand.

"My dear sir," he said, "I cannot tell you how pleased I am to see you here. I am afraid I should have expected to find you literally and figuratively on the other side of the fence. I have never yet been able to convince any one of your cloth of the necessity of allowing to the working

people confined in great cities a chance for innocent and wholesome recreation on the one day that they can call their own. The workman in this country, and especially in New York, works harder and has fewer holidays than any workman in civilization. What with the climate and his three meals of meat a day, he has a tremendous head of steam on, and the standard of work which he makes for himself is such as no European employer would dare set up for his operatives. To condemn such a man to absolute idleness and inactivity one day in seven; to take his beer from him on that one day; to shut him out of every place of innocent enjoyment in a city that is tropically hot in summer, and cold as Russia in winter, and that has only one narrow outlet to country walks, is cruel, my dear sir—positively cruel. And when *you* lend the sanction of your presence to Sunday amusements, so innocent and helpful as these, you are helping nundreds and thousands of stunted lives, and doing more good than your own eyes can see. Look around you! Is there drunkenness here? Is there dissolute conduct or disorder? Why, my dear sir, these people are not only good citizens, but devout members of their own church—it is not yours or mine, but it is theirs. They have been to early mass, and finished their devotions before you and I were out of bed, and——"

The Doctor was growing eloquent, and seemed to be but just started in his discourse. Somehow the Rev. Mr. Pentagon, limp, terrified, white of face, and weak as to his knees, slipped away and

out, through the big gate on whose portals he saw for the first time two huge signs on which he read but two words "FÊTE" and "DIMANCHE."

. . . . . .

The next day Mr. Pentagon went to New York, although he had neither supped nor slept the night before. He wanted to evade the Doctor's daily call, or at least to think things over with himself before he should meet that grave and thoughtful face. He was slowly and painfully walking down Fifth Avenue, his thoughts turned in upon himself, when he felt his hand grasped and warmly shaken. Lifting his eyes, he saw before him a face that gradually revealed itself to his memory as the face of the little vestryman, of the great church of his hopes, who had called upon him some months before to suggest the possibility of his coming to New York. The little man was beaming, and he flourished a newspaper.

"Good! good!" he said, shaking the clergyman's hand up and down, "you have done nobly, Mr. Pentagon! It was a daring thing, sir, very daring; but the very audacity of it has settled the business. The conservative element in our vestry is fairly frightened out of the field. Why, sir, Mr. McGlaisher, the leader of the Sabbatarian wing in our church, actually said that while he could not vote for you, he would not vote against you, and that he could not help respecting a man who had the courage of his convictions. You will be called,

sir, you will be called; as sure as my name *ain't* McGlaisher."

And he bustled away, leaving the daily paper in Mr. Pentagon's hands; and Mr. Pentagon's weak and blinking eyes read:

NO BLUE LAWS FOR HIM!

THE REVEREND MR. PENTAGON ATTENDS A SUNDAY PICNIC.

AND DANCES WITH THE BABIES.

WILL ST. PHYLACTERY'S CALL HIM NOW?

. . . . . .

That evening the Reverend Mr. Pentagon made a confession to the Doctor—or rather two confessions: one of error, and one of conversion.

"But," said he, "will you tell me how it was possible for me to make such an error? The man certainly said *fifteen days.*"

The Doctor's amused smile broadened.

"My dear sir," he said, "we Anglo-Saxons think we belong to the most logical race on the face of the earth, and yet the accurate little Frenchman can give us points three times out of four. With him a week is a *week*—seven days—with us it sometimes is, and sometimes it is not. When you speak of something that happened 'a week ago

this Monday,' you really speak of a period of eight days, or a week and the present Monday. The logical Frenchman does not even think of that space of time as a week; he calls it *huit jours,* in the same way. On the third Wednesday of your stay here, which happened, by the way, to be a saint's day in the Catholic Church, Monsieur Perot very rightly told you that you had been here fifteen days. But with your habit of counting '*exclusively,*' as we call our stupid fashion, you counted the days *done* and not the day you were in. You would not have done it if you had been calculating the date of payment of a note; it was simply illogical habit that counted for you. But you see," he concluded with a little laugh, as he took up his hat, "you had been French for a fortnight."

"Ah, yes, I see," said the Reverend Mr. Pentagon.

And as he heard the Doctor close the front door behind him, he picked up his half-finished sermon "On the Duty of a Strict Observance of the Sabbath" and tore it into small pieces.

THE RED SILK HANDKERCHIEF

THE yellow afternoon sun came in through the long blank windows of the room wherein the Superior Court of the State of New York, Part II., Gillespie, Judge, was in session. The hour of adjournment was near at hand, a dozen court-loungers slouched on the hard benches in the attitudes of cramped carelessness which mark the familiar of the halls of justice. Beyond the rail sat a dozen lawyers and lawyers' clerks, and a dozen weary jurymen. Above the drowsy silence rose the nasal voice of the junior counsel for the defence, who in a high monotone, with his faint eyes fixed on the paper in his hand, was making something like a half-a-score of "requests to charge."

Nobody paid attention to him. Two lawyers' clerks whispered like mischievous schoolboys, hiding behind a pile of books that towered upon a table. Junior counsel for the plaintiff chewed his pencil and took advantage of his opportunity to familiarize himself with certain neglected passages of the New Code. The crier, like a half-dormant old spider, sat in his place and watched a boy who was fidgeting at the far end of the room, and who looked as though he wanted to whistle.

The jurymen might have been dream-men, vague

creations of an autumn afternoon's doze. It was hard to connect them with a world of life and business. Yet, gazing closer, you might have seen that one looked as if he were thinking of his dinner, and another as if he were thinking of the lost love of his youth; and that the expression on the faces of the others ranged from the vacant to the inscrutable. The oldest juror, at the end of the second row, was sound asleep. Everyone in the court-room, except himself, knew it. No one cared.

Gillespie, J., was writing his acceptance of an invitation to a dinner set for that evening at Delmonico's. He was doing this in such a way that he appeared to be taking copious and conscientious notes. Long years on the bench had whitened Judge Gillespie's hair, and taught him how to do this. His seeming attentiveness much encouraged the counsel for the defence, whose high-pitched tone rasped the air like the buzzing of a bee that had found its way through the slats of the blind into some darkened room, of a summer noon, and that, as it seeks angrily for egress, raises its shrill, scandalized protest against the idleness and the pleasant gloom.

"We r'quest y'r Honor t' charge: First, 't forcible entry does not const'oot tresp'ss, 'nless intent's proved. Thus, 'f a man rolls down a bank——"

But the judge's thoughts were in the private supper-room at Delmonico's. He had no interest in the sad fate of the hero of the suppositious case,

who had been obliged by a strange and ingenious combination of accidents, to make violent entrance, incidentally damaging the persons and property of others, into the lands and tenements of his neighbor.

And further away yet the droning lawyer had set a-travelling the thoughts of Horace Walpole, clerk for Messrs. Weeden, Snowden & Gilfeather; for the young man sat with his elbows on the table, his head in his hands, a sad half-smile on his lips, and his brown eyes looking through vacancy to St. Lawrence County, New York.

He saw a great, shabby old house, shabby with the awful shabbiness of a sham grandeur laid bare by time and mocked by the pitiless weather. There was a great sham Grecian portico at one end; the white paint was well-nigh washed away, and the rain-streaked wooden pillars seemed to be weeping tears of penitence for having lied about themselves and pretended to be marble.

The battened walls were cracked and blistered. The Grecian temple on the hillock near looked much like a tomb, and not at all like a summer-house. The flower-garden was so rank and ragged, so overgrown with weed and vine, that it was spared the mortification of revealing its neglected maze, the wonder of the county in 1820. All was sham, save the decay. That was real; and by virtue of its decrepitude the old house seemed to protest against modern contempt, as though it said: "I have had my day. I was built when people thought this sort of thing was the right sort

of thing; when we had our own little pseudo-classic renaissance in America. I lie between the towns of Aristotle and Sabine Farms. I am a gentleman's residence, and my name is Montevista. I was built by a prominent citizen. You need not laugh through your lattices, you smug new Queen Anne cottage, down there in the valley! What will become of you when the falsehood is found out of your imitation bricks and your tiled roof of shingles, and your stained glass that is only a sheet of transparent paper pasted on a pane? You are a young sham; I am an old one. Have some respect for age!"

Its age was the crowning glory of the estate of Montevista. There was nothing new on the place except a third mortgage. Yet had Montevista villa put forth a juster claim to respect, it would have said: "I have had my day. Where all is desolate and silent now, there was once light and life. Along these halls and corridors, the arteries of my being, pulsed a hot blood of joyous humanity, fed with delicate fare, kindled with generous wine. Every corner under my roof was alive with love and hope and ambition. Great men and dear women were here; the host was great and the hostess was gracious among them all. The laughter of children thrilled my gaudily decked stucco. To-day an old man walks up and down my lonely drawing-rooms, with bent head, murmuring to himself odds and ends of tawdry old eloquence, wandering in a dead land of memory, waiting till Death shall take him by the hand

and lead him out of his ruinous house, out of his ruinous life."

Death had indeed come between Horace and the creation of his spiritual vision. Never again should the old man walk, as to the boy's eyes he walked now, over the creaking floors, from where the Nine Muses simpered on the walls of the south parlor to where Homer and Plutarch, equally simpering, yet simpering with a difference—severely simpering—faced each other across the north room. Horace saw his father stalking on his accustomed round, a sad, familiar figure, tall and bent. The hands were clasped behind the back, the chin was bowed on the black stock; but every now and then the thin form drew itself straight, the fine, clean-shaven, aquiline face was raised, beaming with the ghost of an old enthusiasm, and the long right arm was lifted high in the air as he began, his sonorous tones a little tremulous in spite of the restraint of old-time pomposity and deliberation:

"Mr. Speaker, I rise:"—or, "If your Honor please——"

The forlorn, helpless earnestness of this mockery of life touched Horace's heart; and yet he smiled to think how different were the methods and manners of his father from those of brother Hooper, whose requests still droned up to the reverberating hollows of the roof, and there were lost in a subdued boom and snarl of echoes such as a court-room only can beget.

Two generations ago, when the Honorable Horace Kortlandt Walpole was the rising young

lawyer of the State; when he was known as "the Golden-Mouthed Orator of St. Lawrence County," he was in the habit of assuming that he owned whatever court he practised in; and, as a rule, he was right. The most bullock-brained of country judges deferred to the brilliant young master of law and eloquence, and his "requests" were generally accepted as commands and obeyed as such. Of course the great lawyer, for form's sake, threw a veil of humility over his deliverances; but even that he rent to shreds when the fire of his eloquence once got fairly aglow.

"May it please your Honor! Before your Honor exercises the sacred prerogative of your office—before your Honor performs the sacred duty which the State has given into your hands—before, with that lucid genius to which I bow my head, you direct the minds of these twelve good men and true in the path of strict judicial investigation, I ask your Honor to instruct them that they must bring to their deliberations that impartial justice which the laws of our beloved country—of which no abler exponent than your Honor has ever graced the bench—which the laws of our beloved country guarantee to the lowest as well as to the loftiest of her citizens—from the President in the Executive Mansion to the humble artisan at the forge—throughout this broad land, from the lagoons of Louisiana to where the snow-clad forests of Maine hurl defiance at the descendants of Tory refugees in the barren wastes of Nova Scotia——"

Horace remembered every word and every gesture of that speech. He recalled even the quick upward glance from under the shaggy eyebrows with which his father seemed to see again the smirking judge catching at the gross bait of flattery; he knew the little pause which the speaker's memory had filled with the applause of an audience long since dispersed to various silent country graveyards; and he wondered, pityingly, if it were possible that even in his father's prime that wretched allusion to old political hatreds had power to stir the fire of patriotism in the citizen's bosom.

"Poor old father!" said the boy to himself. The voice which had for so many years been but an echo was stilled wholly now. Brief victory and long defeat were nothing now to the golden-mouthed orator.

"Shall I fail as he failed?" thought Horace: "No! I can't. Haven't I got *her* to work for?"

And then he drew out of his breast-pocket a red silk handkerchief and turned it over in his hand with a movement that concealed and caressed at the same time.

It was a very red handkerchief. It was not vermilion, nor "cardinal," nor carmine,—a strange Oriental idealization of blood-red which lay well on the soft, fine, luxurious fabric. But it was an unmistakable, a shameless, a barbaric red.

And as he looked at it, young Hitchcock, of Hitchcock & Van Rensselaer, came up behind him and leaned over his shoulder.

"Where did you get the handkerchief, Walpole?" he whispered; "you ought to hang that out for an auction flag, and sell out your cases."

Horace stuffed it back in his pocket.

"You'd be glad enough to buy some of them, if you got the show," he returned; but the opportunity for a prolonged contest of wit was cut short. The judge was folding his letter, and the nasal counsel, having finished his reading, stood gazing in doubt and trepidation at the bench, and asking himself why his Honor had not passed on each point as presented. He found out.

"Are you prepared to submit those requests in writing?" demanded Gillespie, J., sharply and suddenly. He knew well enough that that poor little nasal, nervous junior counsel would never have trusted himself to speak ten consecutive sentences in court without having every word on paper before him.

"Ye-yes," the counsel stammered, and handed up his careful manuscript.

"I will examine these to-night," said his Honor, and, apparently, he made an endorsement on the papers. He was really writing the address on the envelope of his letter. Then there was a stir, and a conversation between the judge and two or three lawyers, all at once, which was stopped when his Honor gave an Olympian nod to the clerk.

The crier arose.

"He' ye! he' ye! he' ye!" he shouted with perfunctory vigor. "Wah—wah—wah!" the high ceiling slapped back at him; and he declaimed, on

one note, a brief address to "Awperns han bins" in that court, of which nothing was comprehensible save the words "Monday next at eleven o'clock." And then the court collectively rose, and individually put on hats for the most part of the sort called queer.

All the people were chattering in low voices; chairs were moved noisily, and the slumbering juror opened his weary eyes and troubled himself with an uncalled-for effort to look as though he had been awake all the time and didn't like the way things were going, at all. Horace got from the clerk the papers for which he had been waiting, and was passing out, when his Honor saw him and hailed him with an expressive grunt.

Gillespie, J., looked over his spectacles at Horace.

"Shall you see Judge Weeden at the office? Yes? Will you have the kindness to give him this —yes? If it's no trouble to you, of course."

Gillespie, J., was not over-careful of the feelings of lawyers' clerks, as a rule; but he had that decent disinclination to act *ultra præscriptum* which marks the attitude of the well-bred man toward his inferiors in office. He knew that he had no business to use Weeden, Snowden & Gilfeather's clerk as a messenger for his private correspondence.

Horace understood him, took the letter, and allowed himself a quiet smile when he reached the crowded corridor.

What mattered, he thought, as his brisk feet

clattered down the wide stairs of the rotunda, the petty insolence of office *now?* He was Gillespie's messenger to-day; but had not his young powers already received recognition from a greater than Gillespie. If Judge Gillespie lived long enough he should put his gouty old legs under Judge Walpole's mahogany, and prose over his port—yes, he should have port, like the relic of mellow old days that he was—of the times "when your father-in-law and I, Walpole, were boys together."

Ah, there you have the spell of the Red Silk Handkerchief!

It was a wonderful tale to Horace; for he saw it in that wonderful light which shall shine on no man of us more than once in his life—on some of us not at all, Heaven help us!—but in the telling, it is a simple tale:

"The Golden-Mouthed Orator of St. Lawrence" was at the height of his fame in that period of storm and stress which had the civil war for its climax. His misfortune was to be drawn into a contest for which he was not equipped, and in which he had little interest. His sphere of action was far from the battle-ground of the day. The intense localism that bounded his knowledge and his sympathies had but one break—he had tasted in his youth the extravagant hospitality of the South, and he held it in grateful remembrance. So it happened that he was a trimmer—a moderationist he called himself—a man who dealt in optimistic generalities, and who thought that if everybody—the slaves included—would only act

temperately and reasonably, and view the matter from the standpoint of pure policy, the differences of North and South could be settled as easily as, through his own wise intervention, the old turnip-field feud of Farmer Oliver and Farmer Bunker had been wiped out of existence.

His admirers agreed with him, and they sent him to Congress to fill the unexpired short term of their representative, who had just died in Washington of what we now know as malarial fever. It was not to be expected, perhaps, that the Honorable Mr. Walpole would succeed in putting a new face on the great political question in the course of his first term; but they all felt sure that his first speech would startle men who had never heard better than what Daniel Webster had had to offer them.

But the gods were against the Honorable Mr. Walpole. On the day set for his great effort there was what the theatrical people call a counter-attraction. Majah Pike had come up from Mizourah, sah, to cane that demn'd Yankee hound, Chahles Sumnah, sah,—yes, sah, to thrash him like a dawg, begad! And all Washington had turned out to see the performance, which was set down for a certain hour, in front of Mr. Sumner's door.

There was just a quorum when the golden-mouthed member began his great speech,—an inattentive, chattering crowd, that paid no attention to his rolling rhetoric and rococo grandiloquence. He told the empty seats what a great country this was, and how beautiful was a middle policy, and

he illustrated this with a quotation from Homer, in the original Greek (a neat novelty: Latin was fashionable for parliamentary use in Webster's time), with, for the benefit of the uneducated, the well-known translation by the great Alexander Pope, commencing:

> "To calm their passions with the words of Age,
> Slow from his seat arose the Pylian sage,
> Experienced Nestor, in Persuasion skilled,
> Words sweet as honey from his lips distilled."

When Nestor and Mr. Walpole closed, there was no quorum. The member from New Jersey, who had engaged him in debate, was sleeping the sleep of honorable intoxication in his seat. Outside, all Washington was laughing and cursing. Majah Pike had not appeared.

It was the end of the golden-mouthed orator. His voice was never heard again in the House. His one speech was noticed only to be laughed at, and the news went home to his constituents. They showed that magnanimity which the poets tell us is an attribute of the bucolic character. They, so to speak, turned over the pieces of their broken idol with their cow-hide boots, and remarked that they had known it was clay, all along, and dern poor clay at that.

So the golden-mouthed went home, to try to make a ruined practice repair his ruined fortune; to give mortgages on his home to pay the debts his hospitality had incurred; to discuss with a few feeble old friends ways and means by which the

war might have been averted; to beget a son of his old age, and to see the boy grow up in a new generation, with new ideas, new hopes, new ambitions, and a lifetime before him to make memories in.

They had little enough in common, but they came to be great friends as the boy grew older, for Horace inherited all his traits from the old man, except a certain stern energy which came from his silent, strong-hearted mother, and which his father saw with a sad joy.

Mr. Walpole sent his son to New York to study law in the office of Messrs. Weeden, Snowden & Gilfeather, who were a pushing young firm in 1850. Horace found it a very quiet and conservative old concern. Snowden and Gilfeather were dead; Weeden had been on the bench and had gone off the bench at the call of a "lucrative practice;" there were two new partners, whose names appeared only on the glass of the office door and in a corner of the letter-heads.

Horace read his law to some purpose. He became the managing clerk of Messrs. Weeden, Snowden & Gilfeather. This particular managing clerkship was one of unusual dignity and prospective profit. It meant, as it always does, great responsibility, little honor, and less pay. But the firm was so peculiarly constituted that the place was a fine stepping-stone for a bright and ambitious boy. One of the new partners was a business man, who had put his money into the concern in 1860, and who knew and cared nothing about law. He kept the books and managed the money, and

was beyond that only a name on the door and a terror to the office-boys. The other new partner was a young man who made a specialty of collecting debts. He could wring gold out of the stoniest and barrenest debtor; and there his usefulness ended. The general practice of the firm rested on the shoulders of Judge Weeden, who was old, lazy, and luxury-loving, and who, to tell the honest truth, shirked his duties. Such a state of affairs would have wrecked a younger house; but Weeden, Snowden & Gilfeather had a great name, and the consequences of his negligent feebleness had not yet descended upon Judge Weeden's head.

That they would, in a few years, that the Judge knew it, and that he was quite ready to lean on a strong young arm, Horace saw clearly.

That his own arm was growing in strength he also saw; and the Judge knew that, too. He was Judge Weeden's pet. All in the office recognized the fact. All, after reflection, concluded that it was a good thing that he was. New blood had to come into the firm sooner or later, and although it was not possible to watch the successful rise of this boy without a little natural envy and heart-burning, yet it was to be considered that Horace was one who would be honorable, just, and generous wherever fortune put him.

Horace was a gentleman. They all knew it. Barnes and Haskins, the business man and the champion collector, knew it down in the shallows of their vulgar little souls. Judge Weeden, who had some of that mysterious ichor of gentlehood in his

wine-fed veins, knew it and rejoiced in it. And Horace—I can say for Horace that he never forgot it.

He was such a young prince of managing clerks that no one was surprised when he was sent down to Sand Hills, Long Island, to make preparations for the reorganization of the Great Breeze Hotel Company, and the transfer of the property known as the Breeze Hotel and Park to its new owners. The Breeze Hotel was a huge "Queen Anne" vagary which had, after the fashion of hotels, bankrupted its first owners, and was now going into the hands of new people, who were likely to make their fortunes out of it. The property had been in litigation for a year or so; the mechanics' liens were numerous, and the mechanics clamorous; and although the business was not particularly complicated, it needed careful and patient adjustment. Horace knew the case in every detail. He had drudged over it all the winter, with no especial hope of personal advantage, but simply because that was his way of working. He went down in June to the mighty barracks, and lived for a week in what would have been an atmosphere of paint and carpet-dye had it not been for the broad sea-wind that blew through the five hundred open windows, and swept rooms and corridors with salty freshness. The summering folk had not arrived yet; there were only the new manager and his six score of raw recruits of clerks and servants. But Horace felt the warm blood coming back to his cheeks, that the town had somewhat paled, and he

was quite content; and every day he went down to the long, lonely beach, and had a solitary swim, although the sharp water whipped his white skin to a biting red. The sea takes a long while to warm up to the summer, and is sullen about it.

He was to have returned to New York at the end of the week, and Haskins was to have taken his place; but it soon became evident to Weeden, Snowden & Gilfeather that the young man would attend to all that was to be done at Sand Hills quite as well as Mr. Haskins, or quite as well as Judge Weeden himself for that matter. He had to shoulder no great responsibility; the work was mostly of a purely clerical nature, vexatious enough, but simple. It had to be done on the spot, however; the original Breeze Hotel and Park Company was composed of Sand Hillers, and the builders were Sand Hillers, too, the better part of them. And there were titles to be searched; for the whole scheme was an ambitious splurge of Sand Hills pride and it had been undertaken and carried out in a reckless and foolish way. Horace knew all the wretched little details of the case, and so Horace was entrusted with duties such as do not often devolve upon a man of his years; and he took up his burden proudly, and with a glowing consciousness of his own strength.

Judge Weeden missed his active and intelligent obedience in the daily routine of office business; but the Judge thought that it was just as well that Horace should not know the fact. The young man's time would come soon enough, and he would

be none the worse for serving his apprenticeship in modesty and humility. The work entrusted to him was an honor in itself. And then, there was no reason why poor Walpole's boy shouldn't have a sort of half-holiday out in the country and enjoy his youth.

He was not recalled. The week stretched out. He worked hard, found time to play, hugged his quickened ambitions to his breast, wrote hopeful letters to the mother at Montevista, made a luxury of his loneliness, and felt a bashful resentment when the "guests" of the hotel began to pour in from the outside world.

For a day or two he fought shy of them. But these first-comers were lonely, too, and not so much in love with loneliness as he thought he was, and very soon he became one of them. He had found out all the walks and drives; he knew the times of the tides; he had made friends with the fishermen for a league up and down the coast, and he had amassed a store of valuable hints as to where the first blue-fish might be expected to run. Altogether he was a very desirable companion. Besides, that bright, fresh face of his, and a certain look in it, made you friends with him at once, especially if you happened to be a little older, and to remember a look of the sort, lost, lost forever, in a boy's looking-glass.

So he was sought out, and he let himself be found, and the gregarious instinct in him waxed delightfully.

And then It came. Perhaps I should say She

came, but it is not the woman we love; it is our dream of her. Sweet and tender, fair and good, she may be; but let it be honor enough for her that she has that glory about her face which our love kindles to the halo that lights many a man's life to the grave, though the face beneath it be dead or false.

I will not admit that it was only a pretty girl from Philadelphia who came to Sand Hills that first week in July. It was the rosy goddess herself, dove-drawn across the sea, in the warm path of the morning sun—although the tremulous, old-fashioned handwriting on the hotel register only showed that the early train had brought—

"Samuel Rittenhouse, Philadelphia.
"Miss Rittenhouse, do."

It was the Honorable Samuel Rittenhouse, ex-Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, the honored head of the Pennsylvania bar, and the legal representative of the Philadelphia contingent of the New Breeze Hotel and Park Company.

In the evening Horace called upon him in his rooms with a cumbersome stack of papers, and patiently waded through explanations and repetitions until Mr. Rittenhouse's testy courtesy—he had the nervous manner of age apprehensive of youthful irreverence—melted into a complacent and fatherly geniality. Then, when the long task was done and his young guest arose, he picked up

the card that lay on the table and trained his glasses on it.

"H. K. Walpole?" he said. "Are you a New Yorker, sir?"

"From the north of the State," Horace told him.

"Indeed, indeed. Why, let me see—you must be the son of my old friend Walpole—of Otsego—wasn't it?" said the old gentleman, still tentatively.

"St. Lawrence, sir."

"Yes, St. Lawrence—of course, of course. Why, I knew your father well, years ago, sir. We were at college together."

"At Columbia?"

"Yes—yes. Why, bless me," Judge Rittenhouse went on, getting up to look at Horace, "you're the image of your poor father at your age. A very brilliant man, sir, a very able man. I did not see much of him after we left college—I was a Pennsylvanian, and he was from this State—but I have always remembered your father with respect and regard, sir—a very able man. I think I heard of his death some years ago."

"Three years ago," said Horace. His voice fell somewhat. How little to this old man of success was the poor, unnoticed death of failure!

"Three years only!" repeated the Judge, half apologetically. "Ah, people slip away from each other in this world—slip away. But I am glad to

have met you, sir—very much pleased indeed. Rosamond!"

For an hour the subdued creaking of a rocking-chair by the window had been playing a monotonously pleasant melody in Horace's ears. Now and then a coy wisp of bright hair, or the reflected ghost of it, had flashed into view in the extreme lower left-hand corner of a mirror opposite him. Once he had seen a bit of white brow under it, and from time to time the low flutter of turning magazine leaves had put in a brief second to the rocking-chair.

All this time Horace's brains had been among the papers on the table; but something else within him had been swaying to and fro with the rocking-chair, and giving a leap when the wisp of hair bobbed into sight.

Now the rocking-chair accompaniment ceased, and the curtained corner by the window yielded up its treasure, and Miss Rittenhouse came forward, with one hand brushing the wisp of hair back into place, as if she were on easy and familiar terms with it. Horace envied it.

"Rosamond," said the Judge, "this is Mr. Walpole, the son of my old friend Walpole. You have heard me speak of Mr. Walpole's father."

"Yes, papa," said the young lady, all but the corners of her mouth. And, oddly enough, Horace did not think of being saddened because this young woman had never heard of his father. Life was going on a new key, all of a sudden, with a hint of melody to be unfolded that ran in very

different cadences from the poor old tune of memory.

My heroine, over whose head some twenty summers had passed, was now in the luxuriant prime of her youthful beauty. Over a brow whiter than the driven snow fell clustering ringlets. whose hue—

That is the way the good old novelists and story tellers of the Neville and Beverley days would have set out to describe Miss Rittenhouse, had they known her. Fools and blind! As if anyone could describe—as if a poet, even, could more than hint at what a man sees in a woman's face when. seeing, he loves.

For a few moments the talkers were constrained, and the talk was meagre and desultory. Then the Judge, who had been rummaging around among the dust-heaps of his memory, suddenly recalled the fact that he had once, in stage-coach days, passed a night at Montevista, and had been most hospitably treated. He dragged this fact forth, professed a lively remembrance of Mrs. Walpole—"a fine woman, sir, your mother; a woman of many charms,"—asked after her present health; and then, satisfied that he had acquitted himself of his whole duty, withdrew into the distant depths of his own soul and fumbled over the papers Horace had brought him, trying to familiarize himself with them, as a commander might try to learn the faces of his soldiers.

Then the two young people proceeded to find the key together, and began a most harmonious duet.

Sand Hills was the theme. Thus it was that they had to go out on the balcony, where Miss Rittenhouse might gaze into the brooding darkness over the sea, and watch it wink a slow yellow eye with a humorous alternation of sudden and brief red. Thus, also, Horace had to explain how the light-house was constructed. This moved Miss Rittenhouse to scientific research. She must see how it was done. Mr. Walpole would be delighted to show her. Papa was so much interested in those mechanical matters. Mr. Walpole had a team and light wagon at his disposal, and would very much like to drive Miss Rittenhouse and her father over to the light-house. Miss Rittenhouse communicated this kind offer to her father. Her father saw what was expected of him, and dutifully acquiesced, like an obedient American father. Miss Rittenhouse had managed the Rittenhouse household and the head of the house of Rittenhouse ever since her mother's death.

Mr. Walpole really had a team at his disposal. He came from a country where people do not chase foxes, nor substitutes for foxes; but where they know and revere a good trotter. He had speeded many a friend's horse in training for the county fair. When he came to Sand Hills his soundness in the equine branch of a gentleman's education had attracted the attention of a horsey Sand-Hiller, who owned a showy team with a record of 2.37. This team was not to be trusted to the ordinary summer boarder on any terms; but the Sand-Hiller was thrifty and appreciative, and he

lured Horace into hiring the turnout at a trifling rate, and thus captured every cent the boy had to spare, and got his horses judiciously exercised.

There was a showy light wagon to match the team, and the next day the light wagon, with Horace and the Rittenhouses in it, passed every carriage on the road to the light-house, where Miss Rittenhouse satisfied her scientific spirit with one glance at the lantern, after giving which glance she went outside and sat in the shade of the white tower with Horace, while the keeper showed the machinery to the Judge. Perhaps she went to the Judge afterward, and got him to explain it all to her.

Thus it began, and for two golden weeks thus it went on. The reorganized Breeze Hotel and Park Company met in business session on its own property, and Horace acted as a sort of honorary clerk to Judge Rittenhouse. The company, as a company, talked over work for a couple of hours each day. As a congregation of individuals, it ate and drank and smoked and played billiards and fished and slept the rest of the two dozen. Horace had his time pretty much to himself or rather to Miss Rittenhouse, who monopolized it. He drove her to the village to match embroidery stuffs. He danced with her in the evenings, when two stolidly soulful Germans, one with a fiddle and the other with a piano, made the vast dining-room ring and hum with Suppé and Waldteufel, and this was to the great and permanent improvement of his waltzing. She taught him how to play lawn-tennis—he

was an old-fashioned boy from the backwoods, and he thought that croquet was still in existence, so she had to teach him to play lawn-tennis—until he learned to play much better than she could. On the other hand, he was a fresh-water swimmer of rare wind and wiriness, and a young sea-god in the salt, as soon as he got used to its pungent strength. So he taught her to strike out beyond the surf-line, with broad, breath-long sweeps, and there to float and dive and make friends with the ocean. Even he taught her to fold her white arms behind her back, and swim with her feet. As he glanced over his shoulder to watch her following him, and to note the timorous, admiring crowd on the shore, she seemed a sea-bred Venus of Milo in blue serge.

I have known men to be bored by such matters. They made Horace happy. He was happiest, perhaps, when he found out that she was studying Latin. All the girls in Philadelphia were studying Latin that summer. They had had a little school Latin, of course; but now their aims were loftier. Miss Rittenhouse had brought with her a Harkness's Virgil, an Anthon's dictionary, an old Bullion & Morris, and—yes, when Horace asked her, she had brought an Interlinear; but she didn't mean to use it. They rowed out to the buoy, and put the Interlinear in the sea. They sat on the sands after the daily swim, and enthusiastically labored, with many an unclassic excursus, over P. V. Maronis Opera. Horace borrowed some books of a small boy in the hotel, and got up at five

o'clock in the morning to run a couple of hundred lines or so ahead of his pupil, "getting out" a stint that would have made him lead a revolt had any teacher imposed it upon his class a few years before—for he was fresh enough from school to have a little left of the little Latin that colleges give.

He wondered how it was that he had never seen the poetry of the lines before. *Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit*—for perchance it will joy us hereafter to remember these things! He saw the wet and weary sailors on the shore, hungrily eating, breathing hard after their exertions; he heard the deep cheerfulness of their leader's voice. The wind blew toward him over the pine barrens, as fresh as ever it blew past Dido's towers. A whiff of briny joviality and adventurous recklessness seemed to come from the page on his knee. And to him, also, had not She appeared who saw, hard by the sea, that pious old buccaneer-Lothario, so much tossed about on land and upon the deep?

This is what the moderns call a flirtation, and I do not doubt that it was called a flirtation by the moderns around these two young people. Somehow, though, they never got themselves "talked about," not even by the stranded nomads on the hotel verandas. Perhaps this was because there was such a joyous freshness and purity about both of them that it touched the hearts of even the slander-steeped old dragons who rocked all day in the shade, and embroidered tidies and talked ill of

their neighbors. Perhaps it was because they also had that about them which the mean and vulgar mind always sneers at, jeers at, affects to disbelieve in, always recognizes and fears—the courage and power of the finer strain. Envy in spit-curls and jealousy in a false front held their tongues, may be, because, though they knew that they, and even their male representatives, were safe from any violent retort, yet they recognized the superior force, and shrunk from it as the cur edges away from the quiescent whip.

There is a great difference, too, between the flirtations of the grandfatherless and the flirtations of the grandfathered. I wish you to understand that Mr. Walpole and Miss Rittenhouse did not *sprawl* through their flirtation, nor fall into that slipshod familiarity which takes all the delicate beauty of dignity and mutual respect out of such a friendship. Horace did not bow to the horizontal, and Miss Rittenhouse did not make a cheesecake with her skirts when he held open the door for her to pass through; but the bond of courtesy between them was no less sweetly gracious on her side, no less finely reverential on his, than the taste of their grandparents' day would have exacted—no less earnest, I think, that it was a little easier than puff and periwig might have made it.

Yet I also think, whatever was the reason that made the dragons let them alone, that a simple mother of the plain, old-fashioned style is better for a girl of Miss Rosamond Rittenhouse's age

than any such precarious immunity from annoyance.

Ah, the holiday was short! The summons soon came for Horace. They went to the old church together for the second and last time, and he stood beside her, and they held the hymn-book between them.

Horace could not rid himself of the idea that they had stood thus through every Sunday of a glorious summer. The week before he had sung with her. He had a boyish baritone in him, one of those which may be somewhat extravagantly characterized as consisting wholly of middle register. It was a good voice for the campus, and, combined with that startling clearness of utterance which young collegians acquire, had been very effective in the little church. But to-day he had no heart to sing "Byefield" and "Pleyel;" he would rather stand beside her and feel his heart vibrate to the deep lower notes of her tender contralto, and his soul rise with the higher tones that soared upward from her pure young breast. And all the while he was making that act of devotion which—"uttered or unexpressed"—is, indeed, all the worship earth has ever known.

Once she looked up at him as if she asked, "Why don't you sing?" But her eyes fell quickly, he thought with a shade of displeasure in them at something they had seen in his. Yet as he watched her bent head, the cheek near him warmed with a slow, soft blush. He may only have fancied that her clear voice quivered a little with

a tremulo not written in the notes at the top of the page.

And now the last day came. When the workaday world thrust its rough shoulder into Arcadia, and the hours of the idyl were numbered, they set to talking of it as though the two weeks that they had known each other were some sort of epitomized summer. Of course they were to meet again, in New York or in Philadelphia; and of course there were many days of summer in store for Miss Rittenhouse at Sand Hills, at Newport, and at Mount Desert; but Horace's brief season was closed, and somehow she seemed to fall readily into his way of looking upon it as a golden period of special and important value, their joint and exclusive property—something set apart from all the rest of her holiday, where there would be other men and other good times and no Horace.

It was done with much banter and merriment; but through it all Horace listened for delicate undertones that should echo to his ear the earnestness which sometimes rang irrepressibly in his own speech. In that marvellous instrument, a woman's voice, there are strange and fine possibilities of sound that may be the messengers of the subtlest intelligence or the sweet falterings of imperfect control. So Horace, with love to construe for him, did not suffer too cruelly from disappointment.

On the afternoon of that last day they sat upon the beach and saw the smoke of Dido's funeral pile go up, and they closed the dog's-eared Virgil,

and, looking seaward, watched the black clouds from a coaling steamer mar the blinding blue where sea and sky blent at the horizon, watched it grow dull and faint, and fade away, and the illumined turquoise reassert itself.

Then he was for a farewell walk, and she, with that bright acquiescence with which a young girl can make companionship almost perfect, if she will, accepted it as an inspiration, and they set out. They visited together the fishermen's houses, where Horace bade good-by to mighty fisted friends, who stuck their thumbs inside their waistbands and hitched their trousers half way up to their blue-shirted arms, and said to him, "You come up here in Orgust, Mr. Walpole—say 'bout the fus't' the third week 'n Orgust, 'n' we'll give yer some bloo-fishin' 't y' won't need t' lie about, neither." They all liked him, and heartily.

Old Rufe, the gruff hermit of the fishers, who lived a half-mile beyond the settlement, flicked his shuttle through the net he was mending, and did not look up as Horace spoke to him.

"Goin'?" he said; "waal, we've all gotter go some time or uther. The' ain't no real permanen-cy on this uth. Goin'? Waal, I'm"—he paused, and weighed the shuttle in his hand as though to aid him in balancing some important mental process. "Sho! I'm derned 'f I ain't sorry. Squall comin' up, an' don't y' make no mistake," he hurried on, not to be further committed to unguarded expression; "better look sharp, or y'll git a wettin'."

A little puff of gray cloud, scurrying along in the southeast, had spread over half the sky, and now came a strong, eddying wind. A big raindrop made a dark spot on the sand before them; another fell on Miss Rittenhouse's cheek, and then, with a vicious, uncertain patter, the rain began to come down.

"We'll have to run for Poinsett's," said Horace, and stretched out his hand. She took it, and they ran.

Poinsett's was just ahead—a white house on a lift of land, close back of the shore line, with a long garden stretching down in front, and two or three poplar trees. The wind was turning up the pale undersides of grass-blade and flower leaf, and whipping the shivering poplars silver white. Cap'n Poinsett, late of Gloucester, Massachusetts, was tacking down the path in his pea-jacket, with his brass telescope tucked under his arm. He was making for the little white summer-house that overhung the shore; but he stopped to admire the two young people dashing up the slope toward him, for the girl ran with a splendid free stride that kept her well abreast of Horace's athletic lope.

"Come in," he said, opening the gate, and smiling on the two young faces, flushed and wet; "come right in out o' the rain. Be'n runnin', ain't ye? Go right int' the house. Mother!" he called, "here's Mr. Walpole 'n' his young lady. You'll hev to ex-cuse me; I'm a-goin' down t' my observa*tory*. I carn't foller the sea no longer myself, but

I can look at them that dooz. There's my old woman—go right in."

He waddled off, leaving both of them redder than their run accounted for, and Mrs. Poinsett met them at the door, her arms folded in her apron.

"Walk right in," she greeted them; "the cap'n he mus' always go down t' his observa-*tory,* 's he calls it, 'n' gape through thet old telescope of hisn, fust thing the's a squall—jus' 's if he thought he was skipper of all Long Island. But you come right int' the settin'-room 'n' make yourselves to home. Dear me suz! 'f I'd 'a' thought I'd 'a' had company I'd 'a' tidied things up. I'm jus' 's busy, *as* busy, gettin' supper ready; but don't you mind *me*—jus' you make yourselves to home," and she drifted chattering away, and they heard her in the distant kitchen amiably nagging the hired girl.

It was an old-time, low-ceiled room, neat with New England neatness. The windows had many pains of green flint glass, through which they saw the darkening storm swirl over the ocean and ravage the flower-beds near by.

And when they had made an end of watching Cap'n Poinsett in his little summer-house, shifting his long glass to follow each scudding sail far out in the darkness; and when they had looked at the relics of Cap'n Poinsett's voyages to the Orient and the Arctic, and at the cigar-boxes plastered with little shells, and at the wax fruit, and at the family trousers and bonnets in the album, there

was nothing left but that Miss Rittenhouse should sit down at the old piano, bought for Amanda Jane in the last year of the war, and bring forth rusty melody from the yellowed keys.

"What a lovely voice she has!" thought Horace as she sang. No doubt he was right. I would take his word against that of a professor of music, who would have told you that it was a nice voice for a girl, and that the young woman had more natural dramatic expression than technical training.

They fished out Amanda Jane's music-books, and went through "Juanita," and the "Evergreen Waltz," and "Beautiful Isle of the Sea;" and, finding a lot of war-songs, severally and jointly announced their determination to invade Dixie Land, and to annihilate Rebel Hordes; and adjured each other to remember Sumter and Baltimore, and many other matters that could have made but slight impression on their young minds twenty odd years before. Mrs. Poinsett, in the kitchen, stopped nagging her aid, and thought of young John Tarbox Poinsett's name on a great sheet of paper in the Gloucester post-office, one morning at the end of April, 1862, when the news came that Farragut had passed the forts.

The squall was going over, much as it had come, only no one paid attention to its movements now, for the sun was out, trying to straighten up the crushed grass and flowers, and to brighten the hurrying waves, and to soothe the rustling agitation of the poplars.

They must have one more song. Miss Rittenhouse chose "Jeannette and Jeannot," and when she looked back at him with a delicious coy mischief in her eyes, and sang,—

> "There is no one left to love me now,
> And you too may forget"—

Horace felt something flaming in his cheeks and choking in his breast, and it was hard for him to keep from snatching those hands from the keys and telling her she knew better.

But he was man enough not to. He controlled himself, and made himself very pleasant to Mrs. Poinsett about not staying to supper, and they set out for the hotel.

The air was cool and damp after the rain.

"You've been singing," said Horace, "and you will catch cold in this air, and lose your voice. You must tie this handkerchief around your throat."

She took his blue silk handkerchief and tied it around her throat, and wore it until just as they were turning away from the shore, when she took it off to return to him; and the last gust of wind that blew that afternoon whisked it out of her hand, and sent it whirling a hundred yards out to sea.

"Now, don't say a word," said Horace; "it isn't of the slightest consequence."

But he looked very gloomy over it. He had made up his mind that that silk handkerchief

should be the silk handkerchief of all the world to him, from that time on.

. . . . . .

It was one month later that Mr. H. K. Walpole received, in care of Messrs. Weeden, Snowden & Gilfeather, an envelope post-marked Newport, containing a red silk handkerchief. His initials were neatly—nay, beautifully, exquisitely—stitched in one corner. But there was absolutely nothing about the package to show who sent it, and Horace sorrowed over this. Not that he was in any doubt; but he felt that it meant to say that he must not acknowledge it; and, loyally, he did not.

And he soon got over that grief. The lost handkerchief, whose origin was base and common, like other handkerchiefs, and whose sanctity was purely accidental—what was it to *this* handkerchief, worked by her for him?

This became the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace that had changed the boy's whole life. Before this he had had purposes and ambitions. He had meant to take care of his mother, to do well in the world, and to restore, if he could, the honor and glory of the home his father had left him. Here were duty, selfishness, and an innocent vanity. But now he had an end in life, so high that the very seeking of it was a religion. Every thought of self was flooded out of him, and what he sought he sought in a purer and nobler spirit than ever before.

Is it not strange? A couple of weeks at the seaside, a few evenings under the brooding darkness of hotel verandas, the going to and fro of a girl with a sweet face, and this ineradicable change is made in the mind of a man who has forty or fifty years before him wherein to fight the world, to find his place, to become a factor for good or evil.

And here we have Horace, with his heart full of love and his head full of dreams, mooning over a silk handkerchief, in open court.

Not that he often took such chances. The daws of humor peck at the heart worn on the sleeve; and quite rightly, for that is no place for a heart. But in the privacy of his modest lodging-house room he took the handkerchief out, and spread it before him, and looked at it, and kissed it sometimes, I suppose—it seems ungentle to pry thus into the sacredness of a boy's love—and, certainly, kept it in sight, working, studying, or thinking.

With all this, the handkerchief became somewhat rumpled, and at last Horace felt that it must be brought back to the condition of neatness in which he first knew it. So, on a Tuesday, he descended to the kitchen of his lodging-house, and asked for a flat-iron. His good landlady, at the head of an industrious, plump-armed Irish brigade, all vigorously smoothing out towels, stared at him in surprise.

"If there's anything you want ironed, Mr. Walpole, bring it down here, and I'll be *more'n* glad to iron it for you."

Horace grew red, and found his voice going en-

tirely out of his control, as he tried to explain that it wasn't for that—it wasn't for ironing clothes—he was sure nobody could do it but himself.

"Do you want it hot or cold?" asked Mrs. Wilkins, puzzled.

"Cold!" said Horace desperately. And he got it cold, and had to heat it at his own fire to perform his labor of love.

That was of a piece with many things he did. Of a piece, for instance, with his looking in at the milliners' windows and trying to think which bonnet would best become her—and then taking himself severely to task for dreaming that she would wear a ready-made bonnet. Of a piece with his buying two seats for the theatre, and going alone and fancying her next him, and glancing furtively at the empty place at the points where he thought she would be amused, or pleased, or moved.

What a fool he was! Yes, my friend, and so are you and I. And remember that this boy's foolishness did not keep him tossing, stark awake, through ghastly nights; did not start him up in the morning with a hot throat and an unrested brain; did not send him down to his day's work with the haunting, clutching, lurking fear that springs forward at every stroke of the clock, at every opening of the door. Perhaps you and I have known folly worse than his.

Through all the winter—the red handkerchief cheered the hideous first Monday in October and the Christmas holidays, when business kept him from going home to Montevista—he heard little or

nothing of her. His friends in the city, or rather his father's friends, were all ingrained New Yorkers, dating from the provincial period, who knew not Philadelphia; and it was only from an occasional newspaper paragraph that he learned that Judge Rittenhouse and his daughter were travelling through the South, for the Judge's health. Of course, he had a standing invitation to call on them whenever he should find himself in Philadelphia; but they never came nearer Philadelphia than Washington, and so he never found himself in Philadelphia. He was not so sorry for this as you might think a lover should be. He knew that, with a little patience, he might present himself to Judge Rittenhouse as something more than a lawyer's managing clerk.

For, meanwhile, good news had come from home, and things were going well with him. Mineral springs had been discovered at Aristotle—mineral springs may be discovered anywhere in north New York, if you only try; though it is sometimes difficult to fit them with the proper Indian legends. The name of the town had been changed to Avoca, and there was already an Avoca Improvement Company, building a big hotel, advertising right and left, and prophesying that the day of Saratoga and Sharon and Richfield was ended. So the barrens between Montevista and Aristotle, skirting the railroad, suddenly took on a value. Hitherto they had been unsalable, except for taxes. For the most part they were an adjunct of the estate of Montevista; and in February

Horace went up to St. Lawrence County and began the series of sales that was to realize his father's most hopeless dream, and clear Montevista of all incumbrances.

How pat it all came, he thought, as, on his return trip, the train carried him past the little old station, with its glaring new sign, AVOCA, just beyond the broad stretch of "Squire Walpole's bad land," now sprouting with the surveyors' stakes. After all was paid off on the old home, there would be enough left to enable him to buy out Haskins, who had openly expressed his desire to get into a "live firm," and who was willing to part with his interest for a reasonable sum down, backed up by a succession of easy instalments. And Judge Weeden had intimated, as clearly as dignity would permit, his anxiety that Horace should seize the opportunity.

. . . . . .

Winter was still on the Jersey flats on the last day of March; but Horace, waiting at a little "flag station," found the air full of crude prophecies of spring. He had been searching titles all day, in a close and gloomy little town-hall, and he was glad to be out-of-doors again, and to think that he should be back in New York by dinner time, for it was past five o'clock.

But a talk with the station-master made the prospect less bright. No train would stop there until seven.

Was there no other way of getting home? The

lonely guardian of the Gothic shanty thought it over, and found that there was a way. He talked of the trains as though they were whimsical creatures under his charge.

"The's a freight coming down right now," he said, meditatively, "but I can't do nothin' with her. She gotter get along mighty lively to keep ahead of the Express from Philadelphia till she gets to the junction and goes on a siding till the Express goes past. And as to the Express—why, I couldn't no more flag her than if she was a cyclone. But I tell you what you do. You walk right down to the junction—'bout a mile 'n' a half down—and see if you can't do something with number ninety-seven on the other road. You see, she goes on to New York on our tracks, and she mostly's in the habit of waiting at the junction 'bout—say five to seven minutes, to give that Express from Philadelphia a fair start. That Express has it pretty much her own way on this road, for a fact. You go down to the junction—walk right down the line—and you'll get ninety-seven—there ain't no kind of doubt about it. You can't see the junction; but it's just half a mile beyond that curve down there."

So there was nothing to be done but to walk to the junction. The railroad ran a straight, steadily descending mile on the top of a high embankment, and then suddenly turned out of sight around a ragged elevation. Horace buttoned his light overcoat, and tramped down the cinder-path between the tracks.

Yes, spring was coming. The setting sun beamed a soft, hopeful red over the shoulder of the ragged elevation; light, drifting mists rose from the marsh land below him, and the last low rays struck a vapory opal through them. There was a warm, almost prismatic purple hanging over the outlines of the hills and woods far to the east. The damp air, even, had a certain languid warmth in it; and though there was snow in the little hollows at the foot of the embankment, and bits of thin whitish ice were in the swampy pools, it was clear enough to Horace that spring was at hand. Spring—and then summer; and, by the sea or in the mountains, the junior partner of the house of Weeden, Snowden & Gilfeather might hope to meet once more with Judge Rittenhouse's daughter.

The noise of the freight train, far up the track behind him, disturbed Horace's springtime revery. A forethought of rocking gravel-cars scattering the overplus of their load by the way, and of reeking oil-tanks, filling the air with petroleum, sent him down the embankment to wait until the way was once more clear.

The freight train went by and above him with a long-drawn roar and clatter, and with a sudden fierce crash, and the shriek of iron upon iron, at the end, and the last truck of the last car came down the embankment, tearing a gully behind it, and ploughed a grave for itself in the marsh ten yards ahead of him.

And looking up, he saw a twisted rail raising

its head like a shining serpent above the dim line of the embankment. A furious rush took Horace up the slope. A quarter of a mile below him the freight train was slipping around the curve. The fallen end of the last car was beating and tearing the ties. He heard the shrill shriek of the brakes and the frightened whistle of the locomotive. But the grade was steep, and it was hard to stop. And if they did stop they were half a mile from the junction—half a mile from their only chance of warning the Express.

Horace heard in his ears the station-master's words: "She's gotter get along mighty lively to keep ahead of the Express from Philadelphia."

"Mighty lively—mighty lively"—the words rang through his brain to the time of thundering car-wheels.

He knew where he stood. He had made three-quarters of the straight mile. He was three-quarters of a mile, then, from the little station. His overcoat was off in half a second. Many a time had he stripped, with that familiar movement, to trunks and sleeveless shirt, to run his mile or his half-mile; but never had such a thirteen hundred yards lain before him, up such a track, to be run for such an end.

The sweat was on his forehead before his right foot passed his left.

His young muscles strove and stretched. His feet struck the soft, unstable path of cinders with strong, regular blows. His tense forearms strained upward from his sides. Under his chest,

thrown outward from his shoulders, was a constricting line of pain. His wet face burnt. There was a fire in his temples, and at every breath of his swelling nostrils something throbbed behind his eyes. The eyes saw nothing but a dancing dazzle of tracks and ties, through a burning blindness. And his feet beat, beat, beat, till the shifting cinders seemed afire under him.

That is what this human machine was doing, going at this extreme pressure; every muscle, every breath, every drop of blood alive with the pain of this intense stress. Looking at it you would have said, "A fleet, light-limbed young man, with a stride like a deer, throwing the yards under him in fine style." All we know about the running other folks are making in this world!

Halfway up the track Horace stopped short, panting hard, his heart beating like a crazy drum, a nervous shiver on him. Up the track there was a dull whirr, and he saw the engine of the express train slipping down on him—past the station already.

The white mists from the marshes had risen up over the embankment. The last rays of the sunset shot through them, brilliant and blinding. Horace could see the engine; but would the engineer see him, waving his hands in futile gestures, in time to stop on that slippery, sharp grade? And of what use would be his choking voice when the dull whirr should turn into a roar? For a moment, in his hopeless disappointment, Horace felt like throwing himself in the path of the train,

like a wasted thing that has no right to live, after so great a failure.

As will happen to those who are stunned by a great blow, his mind ran back mechanically to the things nearest his heart, and in a flash he went through the two weeks of his life. And then, before the thought had time to form itself, he had brought a red silk handkerchief from his breast, and was waving it with both hands, a fiery crimson in the opal mist.

Seen. The whistle shrieked; there was a groan and a creak of brakes, the thunder of the train resolved itself into various rattling noises, the engine slipped slowly by him, and slowed down, and he stood by the platform of the last car as the express stopped.

There was a crowd around Horace in an instant. His head was whirling, but in a dull way he said what he had to say. An officious passenger, who would have explained it all to the conductor if the conductor had waited, took the deliverer in his arms—for the boy was near fainting—and enlightened the passengers who flocked around.

Horace hung in his embrace, too deadly weak even to accept the offer of one of the dozen flasks that were thrust at him. Nothing was very clear in his mind; as far as he could make out, his most distinct impression was of a broad, flat beach, a blue sea and a blue sky, a black steamer making a black trail of smoke across them, and a voice soft as an angel's reading Latin close to him.

Then he opened his eyes and saw the woman of the voice standing in front of him.

"Oh, Richard," he heard her say, "it's Mr. Walpole!"

Horace struggled to his feet. She took his hand in both of hers and drew closer to him; the crowd falling back a little, seeing that they were friends.

"What can I ever say to thank you?" she said. "You have saved our lives. It's not so much for myself, but"—she blushed faintly, and Horace felt her hands tremble on his—"Richard—my husband—we were married to-day, you know—and——"

Something black and heavy came between Horace and life for a few minutes. When it passed away he straightened himself up out of the arms of the officious passenger and stared about him, mind and memory coming back to him. The people around looked at him oddly. A brakeman brought him his overcoat, and he stood unresistingly while it was slipped on him. Then he turned away and started down the embankment.

"Hold on!" cried the officious passenger excitedly; "we're getting up a testimonial——"

Horace never heard it. How he found his way he never cared to recall; but the gas was dim in the city streets, and the fire was out in his little lodging-house room when he came home; and his narrow white bed knows all that I cannot tell of his tears and his broken dreams.

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"Walpole," said Judge Weeden, as he stood between the yawning doors of the office safe, one morning in June, "I observe that you have a private package here. Why do you not use the drawer of our—our late associate, Mr. Haskins? It is yours now, you know. I'll put your package in it." He poised the heavily sealed envelope in his hand. "Very odd *feeling* package, Walpole. Remarkably soft!" he said. "Well, bless me, it's none of my business, of course. Horace, how much you look like your father!"

OUR AROMATIC UNCLE

IT is always with a feeling of personal tenderness and regret that I recall his story, although it began long before I was born, and must have ended shortly after that important date, and although I myself never laid eyes on the personage of whom my wife and I always speak as "The Aromatic Uncle."

The story begins so long ago, indeed, that I can tell it only as a tradition of my wife's family. It goes back to the days when Boston was so frankly provincial a town that one of its leading citizens, a man of eminent position and ancient family, remarked to a young kinsman whom he was entertaining at his hospitable board, by way of pleasing and profitable discourse: "Nephew, it may interest you to know that it is Mr. Everett who has the *other* hindquarter of this lamb." This simple tale I will vouch for, for I got it from the lips of the nephew, who has been my uncle for so many years that I know him to be a trustworthy authority.

In those days which seem so far away—and yet the space between them and us is spanned by a lifetime of three-score years and ten—life was simpler in all its details; yet such towns as Boston, already old, had well-established local

customs which varied not at all from year to year; many of which lingered in later phases of urban growth. In Boston, or at least in that part of Boston where my wife's family dwelt, it was the invariable custom for the head of the family to go to market in the early morning with his wife's list of the day's needs. When the list was filled, the articles were placed in a basket; and the baskets thus filled were systematically deposited by the market-boys at the back-door of the house to which they were consigned. Then the housekeeper came to the back-door at her convenience, and took the basket in. Exposed as this position must have been, such a thing as a theft of the day's edibles was unknown, and the first authentic account of any illegitimate handling of the baskets brings me to the introduction of my wife's uncle.

It was on a summer morning, as far as I can find out, that a little butcher-boy—a very little butcher-boy to be driving so big a cart—stopped in the rear of two houses that stood close together in a suburban street. One of these houses belonged to my wife's father, who was, from all I can gather, a very pompous, severe, and generally objectionable old gentleman; a Judge, and a very considerable dignitary, who apparently devoted all his leisure to making life miserable for his family. The other was owned by a comparatively poor and unimportant man, who did a shipping business in a small way. He had bought it during a period of temporary affluence, and it hung on his

hands like a white elephant. He could not sell it, and it was turning his hair gray to pay the taxes on it. On this particular morning he had got up at four o'clock to go down to the wharves to see if a certain ship in which he was interested had arrived. It was due and overdue, and its arrival would settle the question of his domestic comfort for the whole year; for if it failed to appear, or came home with an empty bottom, his fate would be hard indeed; but if it brought him money or marketable goods from its long Oriental trip, he might take heart of grace and look forward to better times.

When the butcher's boy stopped at the house of my wife's father, he set down at the back-door a basket containing fish, a big joint of roast beef, and a generous load of fruit and vegetables, including some fine, fat oranges. At the other door he left a rather unpromising-looking lump of steak and a half-peck of potatoes, not of the first quality. When he had deposited these two burdens he ran back and started his cart up the road.

But he looked back as he did so, and he saw a sight familiar to him, and saw the commission of a deed entirely unfamiliar. A handsome young boy of about his own age stepped out of the back-door of my wife's father's house and looked carelessly around him. He was one of the boys who compel the admiration of all other boys—strong, sturdy, and a trifle arrogant.

He had long ago compelled the admiration of

the little butcher-boy. They had been playmates together at the public school, and although the Judge's son looked down from an infinite height upon his poor little comrade, the butcher-boy worshipped him with the deepest and most fervent adoration. He had for him the admiring reverence which the boy who can't lick anybody has for the boy who can lick everybody. He was a superior being, a pattern, a model; an ideal never to be achieved, but perhaps in a crude, humble way to be imitated. And there is no hero worship in the world like a boy's worship of a boy-hero.

The sight of this fortunate and adorable youth was familiar enough to the butcher-boy, but the thing he did startled and shocked that poor little workingman almost as much as if his idol had committed a capital crime right before his very eyes. For the Judge's son suddenly let a look into his face that meant mischief, glanced around him to see whether anybody was observing him or not, and, failing to notice the butcher-boy, quickly and dexterously changed the two baskets. Then he went back into the house and shut the door on himself.

The butcher-boy reined up his horse and jumped from his cart. His first impulse, of course, was to undo the shocking iniquity which the object of his admiration had committed. But before he had walked back a dozen yards, it struck him that he was taking a great liberty in spoiling the other boy's joke. It was wrong, of course, he knew it;

but was it for him to rebuke the wrong-doing of such an exalted personage? If the Judge's son came out again, he would see that his joke had miscarried, and then he would be displeased. And to the butcher-boy it did not seem right in the nature of things that anything should displease the Judge's son. Three times he went hesitatingly backward and forward, trying to make up his mind, and then he made it up. The king could do no wrong. Of course he himself was doing wrong in not putting the baskets back where they belonged; but then, he reflected, he took that sin on his own humble conscience, and in some measure took it off the conscience of the Judge's son—if, indeed, it troubled that lightsome conscience at all. And, of course, too, he knew that, being an apprentice, he would be whipped for it when the substitution was discovered. But he didn't mind being whipped for the boy he worshipped. So he drove out along the road; and the wife of the poor shipping-merchant, coming to the back-door, and finding the basket full of good things, and noticing especially the beautiful China oranges, naturally concluded that her husband's ship had come in, and that he had provided his family with a rare treat. And the Judge, when he came home to dinner, and Mrs. Judge introduced him to the rump-steak and potatoes—but I do not wish to make this story any more pathetic than is necessary.

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A few months after this episode, perhaps

indirectly in consequence of it—I have never been able to find out exactly—the Judge's son, my wife's uncle, ran away to sea, and for many years his recklessness, his strength, and his good looks were only traditions in the family, but traditions which he himself kept alive by remembrances than which none could have been more effective.

At first he wrote but seldom, later on more regularly, but his letters—I have seen many of them—were the most uncommunicative documents that I ever saw in my life. His wanderings took him to many strange places on the other side of the globe, but he never wrote of what he saw or did. His family gleaned from them that his health was good, that the weather was such-and-such, and that he wished to have his love, duty, and respects conveyed to his various relatives. In fact, the first positive bit of personal intelligence that they received from him was five years after his departure, when he wrote them from a Chinese port on letter-paper whose heading showed that he was a member of a commercial firm. The letter itself made no mention of the fact. As the years passed on, however, the letters came more regularly and they told less about the weather, and were slightly—very slightly—more expressive of a kind regard for his relatives. But at the best they were cramped by the formality of his day and generation, and we of to-day would have called them cold and perfunctory.

But the practical assurances that he gave of his

undiminished—nay, his steadily increasing—affection for the people at home, were of a most satisfying character, for they were convincing proof not only of his love but of his material prosperity. Almost from his first time of writing he began to send gifts to all the members of the family. At first these were mere trifles, little curios of travel such as he was able to purchase out of a seaman's scanty wages; but as the years went on they grew richer and richer, till the munificence of the runaway son became the pride of the whole family.

The old house that had been in the suburbs of Boston was fairly in the heart of the city when I first made its acquaintance, and one of the famous houses of the town. And it was no wonder it was famous, for such a collection of Oriental furniture, bric-à-brac, and objects of art never was seen outside of a museum. There were ebony cabinets, book-cases, tables, and couches wonderfully carved and inlaid with mother-of-pearl. There were beautiful things in bronze and jade and ivory. There were all sorts of strange rugs and curtains and portières. As to the china-ware and the vases, no house was ever so stocked; and as for such trifles as shawls and fans and silk handkerchiefs, why such things were sent not singly but by dozens.

No one could forget his first entrance into that house. The great drawing-room was darkened by heavy curtains, and at first you had only a dim vision of the strange and graceful shapes of its

curious furnishing. But you could not but be instantly conscious of the delicate perfume that pervaded the apartment, and, for the matter of that, the whole house. It was a combination of all the delightful Eastern smells—not sandalwood only, nor teak, nor couscous, but all these odors and a hundred others blent in one. Yet it was not heavy nor overpowering, but delightfully faint and sweet, diffused through those ample rooms. There was good reason, indeed, for the children of the generation to which my wife belonged to speak of the generous relative whom they had never seen as "Our Aromatic Uncle." There were other uncles, and I have no doubt they gave presents freely, for it was a wealthy and free-handed family; but there was no other uncle who sent such a delicate and delightful reminder with every gift, to breathe a soft memory of him by day and by night.

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I did my courting in the sweet atmosphere of that house, and, although I had no earthly desire to live in Boston, I could not help missing that strangely blended odor when my wife and I moved into an old house in an old part of New York, whose former owners had no connections in the Eastern trade. It was a charming and home-like old house; but at first, although my wife had brought some belongings from her father's house, we missed the pleasant flavor of our aromatic uncle, for he was now my uncle, as well as my

wife's. I say at first, for we did not miss it long. Uncle David—that was his name—not only continued to send his fragrant gifts to my wife at Christmas and upon her birthday, but he actually adopted me, too, and sent me Chinese cabinets and Chinese gods in various minerals and metals, and many articles designed for a smoker's use, which no smoker would ever want to touch with a ten-foot pole. But I cared very little about the utility of these presents, for it was not many years before, among them all, they set up that exquisite perfume in the house, which we had learned to associate with our aromatic uncle.

"Foo-choo-li, China, January—, 18—.

"Dear Nephew and Niece: The Present is to inform you that I have this day shipped to your address, per Steamer Ocean Queen, one marble and ebony Table, six assorted gods, and a blue Dinner set; also that I purpose leaving this Country for a visit to the Land of my Nativity on the 6th of March next, and will, if same is satisfactory to you, take up my Abode temporarily in your household. Should same not be satisfactory, please cable at my charge. Messrs. Smithson & Smithson, my Customs Brokers, will attend to all charges on the goods, and will deliver them at your readiness. The health of this place is better than customary by reason of the cool weather, which Health I am as usual enjoying. Trusting that you both are at present in the possession of

the same Blessing, and will so continue, I remain, dear nephew and niece,

"Your affectionate
"UNCLE."

. . . . . .

This was, I believe, by four dozen words—those which he used to inform us of his intention of visiting America—the longest letter that Uncle David had ever written to any member of his family. It also conveyed more information about himself than he had ever given since the day he ran away to sea. Of course we cabled the old gentleman that we should be delighted to see him.

And late that Spring, at some date at which he could not possibly have been expected to arrive, he turned up at our house.

Of course we had talked a great deal about him, and wondered what manner of a man we should find him. Between us, my wife and I had got an idea of his personal appearance which I despair of conveying in words. Vaguely, I should say that we had pictured him as something midway between an abnormally tall Chinese mandarin and a benevolent Quaker. What we found when we got home and were told that our uncle from India was awaiting us, was a shrunken and bent old gentleman, dressed very cleanly and neatly in black broadcloth, with a limp, many pleated shirt-front of old-fashioned style, and a plain black cravat. If he had worn an old-time stock we could have forgiven him for the rest of the dis-

appointment he cost us; but we had to admit to ourselves that he had the most absolutely commonplace appearance of all our acquaintances. In fact, we soon discovered that, except for a taciturnity the like of which we had never encountered, our aromatic uncle had positively not one picturesque characteristic about him. Even his aroma was a disappointment. He had it, but it was patchouly or some other cheap perfume of the sort, wherewith he scented his handkerchief, which was not a bandanna, but a plain decent white one of the unnecessarily large sort which clergymen and old gentlemen affect.

But, even if we could not get one single romantic association to cluster about him, we very soon got to like the old gentleman. It is true that at our first meeting, after saying "How d'ye do" to me and receiving in impassive placidity the kiss which my wife gave him, he relapsed into dead silence, and continued to smoke a clay pipe with a long stem and a short bowl. This instrument he filled and refilled every few minutes, and it seemed to be his only employment. We plied him with questions, of course, but to these he responded with a wonderful brevity. In the course of an hour's conversation we got from him that he had had a pleasant voyage, that it was not a long voyage, that it was not a short voyage, that it was about the usual voyage, that he had not been seasick, that he was glad to be back, and that he was not surprised to find the country very much changed. This last piece of information

was repeated in the form of a simple "No," given in reply to the direct question; and although it was given politely, and evidently without the least unamiable intent, it made us both feel very cheap. After all, it *was* absurd to ask a man if he were surprised to find the country changed after fifty or sixty years of absence. Unless he was an idiot, and unable to read at that, he must have expected something of the sort.

But we grew to like him. He was thoroughly kind and inoffensive in every way. He was entirely willing to be talked to, but he did not care to talk. If it was absolutely necessary, he *could* talk, and when he did talk he always made me think of the "French-English Dictionary for the Pocket," compiled by the ingenious Mr. John Bellows; for nobody except that extraordinary Englishman could condense a greater amount of information into a smaller number of words. During the time of his stay with us I think I learned more about China than any other man in the United States knew, and I do not believe that the aggregate of his utterances in the course of that six months could have amounted to one hour's continuous talk. Don't ask me for the information. I had no sort of use for it, and I forgot it as soon as I could. I like Chinese bric-à-brac, but my interest in China ends there.

Yet it was not long before Uncle David slid into his own place in the family circle. We soon found that he did not expect us to entertain him. He wanted only to sit quiet and smoke his pipe, to

take his two daily walks by himself, and to read the daily paper one afternoon and Macaulay's "History of England" the next. He was never tired of sitting and gazing amiably but silently at my wife; and, to head the list of his good points, he would hold the baby by the hour, and for some mysterious reason that baby, who required the exhibition of seventeen toys in a minute to be reasonably quiet in the arms of anybody else, would sit placidly in Uncle David's lap, teething away steadily on the old gentleman's watch-chain, as quiet and as solemn and as aged in appearance as any one of the assorted gods of porcelain and jade and ivory which our aromatic uncle had sent us.

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The old house in Boston was a thing of the past. My wife's parents had been dead for some years, and no one remained of her immediate family except a certain Aunt Lucretia, who had lived with them until shortly before our marriage, when the breaking up of the family sent her West to find a home with a distant relative in California. We asked Uncle Davy if he had stopped to see Aunt Lucretia as he came through California. He said he had not. We asked him if he wanted to have Aunt Lucretia invited on to pass a visit during his stay with us. He answered that he did not. This did not surprise us at all. You might think that a brother might long to see a sister from whom he had been separated nearly all of a long

lifetime, but then you might never have met Aunt Lucretia. My wife made the offer only from a sense of duty; and only after a contest with me which lasted three days and nights. Nothing but loss of sleep during an exceptionally busy time at my office induced me to consent to her project of inviting Aunt Lucretia. When Uncle David put his veto upon the proposition I felt that he might have taken back all his rare and costly gifts, and I could still have loved him.

But Aunt Lucretia came, all the same. My wife is afflicted with a New England conscience, originally of a most uncomfortable character. It has been much modified and ameliorated, until it is now considerably less like a case of moral hives; but some wretched lingering remnant of the original article induced her to write to Aunt Lucretia that Uncle David was staying with us, and of course Aunt Lucretia came without invitation and without warning, dropping in on us with ruthless unexpectedness.

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You may not think, from what I have said, that Aunt Lucretia's visit was a pleasant event. But it was, in some respects; for it was not only the shortest visit she ever paid us, but it was the last with which she ever honored us.

She arrived one morning shortly after breakfast, just as we were preparing to go out for a drive. She would not have been Aunt Lucretia if she had not upset somebody's calculations at

every turn of her existence. We welcomed her with as much hypocrisy as we could summon to our aid on short notice, and she was not more than usually offensive, although she certainly did herself full justice in telling us what she thought of us for not inviting her as soon as we even heard of Uncle David's intention to return to his native land. She said she ought to have been the first to embrace her beloved brother—to whom I don't believe she had given one thought in more years than I have yet seen.

Uncle David was dressing for his drive. His long residence in tropical countries had rendered him sensitive to the cold, and although it was a fine, clear September day, with the thermometer at about sixty, he was industriously building himself up with a series of overcoats. On a really snappy day I have known him to get into six of these garments; and when he entered the room on this occasion I think he had on five, at least.

My wife had heard his familiar foot on the stairs, and Aunt Lucretia had risen up and braced herself for an outburst of emotional affection. I could see that it was going to be such a greeting as is given only once in two or three centuries, and then on the stage. I felt sure it would end in a swoon, and I was looking around for a sofa-pillow for the old lady to fall upon, for from what I knew of Aunt Lucretia I did not believe she had ever swooned enough to be able to go through the performance without danger to her aged person.

But I need not have troubled myself. Uncle David toddled into the room, gazed at Aunt Lucretia without a sign of recognition in his features, and toddled out into the hall, where he got his hat and gloves, and went out to the front lawn, where he always paced up and down for a few minutes before taking a drive, in order to stimulate his circulation. This was a surprise, but Aunt Lucretia's behavior was a greater surprise. The moment she set eyes on Uncle David the theatrical fervor went out of her entire system, literally in one instant; and an absolutely natural, unaffected astonishment displayed itself in her expressive and strongly marked features. For almost a minute, until the sound of Uncle David's footsteps had died away, she stood absolutely rigid; while my wife and I gazed at her spellbound.

Then Aunt Lucretia pointed one long bony finger at me, and hissed out with a true feminine disregard of grammar:

"That ain't *him!*"

. . . . . .

"David," said Aunt Lucretia, impressively, "had only one arm. He lost the other in Madagascar."

I was too dumfounded to take in the situation. I remember thinking, in a vague sort of way, that Madagascar was a curious sort of place to go for the purpose of losing an arm; but I did not apprehend the full significance of this disclosure until I

heard my wife's distressed protestations that Aunt Lucretia must be mistaken; there must be some horrible mistake somewhere.

But Aunt Lucretia was not mistaken, and there was no mistake anywhere. The arm had been lost, and lost in Madagascar, and she could give the date of the occurrence, and the circumstances attendant. Moreover, she produced her evidence on the spot. It was an old daguerreotype, taken in Calcutta a year or two after the Madagascar episode. She had it in her hand-bag, and she opened it with fingers trembling with rage and excitement. It showed two men standing side by side near one of those three-foot Ionic pillars that were an indispensable adjunct of photography in its early stages. One of the men was large, broad-shouldered, and handsome—unmistakably a handsome edition of Aunt Lucretia. His empty left sleeve was pinned across his breast. The other man was, making allowance for the difference in years, no less unmistakably the Uncle David who was at that moment walking to and fro under our windows. For one instant my wife's face lighted up.

"Why, Aunt Lucretia," she cried, "there he is! That's Uncle David, dear Uncle David."

"There he is *not*," replied Aunt Lucretia. "That's his business partner—some common person that he picked up on the ship he first sailed in—and, upon my word, I do believe it's that wretched creature outside. And I'll Uncle David *him*."

She marched out like a grenadier going to battle, and we followed her meekly. There was, unfortunately, no room for doubt in the case. It only needed a glance to see that the man with one arm was a member of my wife's family, and that the man by his side, *our* Uncle David, bore no resemblance to him in stature or features.

Out on the lawn Aunt Lucretia sailed into the dear old gentleman in the five overcoats with a volley of vituperation. He did not interrupt her, but stood patiently to the end, listening, with his hands behind his back; and when, with her last gasp of available breath, Aunt Lucretia demanded:

"Who—who—who *are* you, you wretch?" he responded, calmly and respectfully:

"I'm Tommy Biggs, Miss Lucretia."

But just here my wife threw herself on his neck and hugged him, and cried:

"You're my own dear Uncle David, *anyway!*"

It was a fortunate, a gloriously fortunate, inspiration. Aunt Lucretia drew herself up in speechless scorn, stretched forth her bony finger, tried to say something and failed, and then she and her hand-bag went out of my gates, never to come in again.

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When she had gone, our aromatic uncle—for we shall always continue to think of him in that light, or rather in that odor—looked thoughtfully after her till she disappeared, and then made one of the

few remarks I ever knew him to volunteer.

"Ain't changed a mite in forty-seven years."

Up to this time I had been in a dazed condition of mind. As I have said, my wife's family was extinct save for herself and Aunt Lucretia, and she remembered so little of her parents, and she looked herself so little like Aunt Lucretia, that it was small wonder that neither of us remarked Uncle David's unlikeness to the family type. We knew that he did not resemble the ideal we had formed of him; and that had been the only consideration we had given to his looks. Now, it took only a moment of reflection to recall the fact that all the members of the family had been tall and shapely, and that even between the ugly ones, like Aunt Lucretia, and the pretty ones, like my wife, there was a certain resemblance. Perhaps it was only the nose—the nose is the brand in most families, I believe—but whatever it was, I had only to see my wife and Aunt Lucretia together to realize that the man who had passed himself off as our Uncle David had not one feature in common with either of them—nor with the one-armed man in the daguerreotype. I was thinking of this, and looking at my wife's troubled face, when our aromatic uncle touched me on the arm.

"I'll explain," he said, "to you. *You* tell *her*."

We dismissed the carriage, went into the house, and sat down. The old gentleman was perfectly cool and collected, but he lit his clay pipe, and reflected for a good five minutes before he opened his mouth. Then he began:

"Finest man in the world, sir. Finest *boy* in the world. Never anything like him. But, peculiarities. Had 'em. Peculiarities. Wouldn't write home. Wouldn't"—here he hesitated—"send things home. I had to do it. Did it for him. Didn't want his folks to know. Other peculiarities. Never had any money. Other peculiarities. Drank. Other peculiarities. Ladies. Finest man in the world, all the same. Nobody like him. Kept him right with his folks for thirty-one years. Then died. Fever. Canton. Never been myself since. Kept right on writing, all the same. Also—" here he hesitated again—"sending things. Why? Don't know. Been a fool all my life. Never could do anything but make money. No family, no friends. Only *him*. Ran away to sea to look after him. Did look after him. Thought maybe your wife would be some like him. Barring peculiarities, she is. Getting old. Came here for company. Meant no harm. Didn't calculate on Miss Lucretia."

Here he paused and smoked reflectively for a minute or two.

"Hot in the collar—Miss Lucretia. Haughty. Like him, some. Just like she was forty-seven years ago. Slapped my face one day when I was delivering meat, because my jumper wasn't clean. Ain't changed a mite."

This was the first condensed statement of the case of our aromatic uncle. It was only in reply to patient, and, I hope, loving, gentle, and considerate questioning that the whole story came

out—at once pitiful and noble—of the poor little butcher-boy who ran away to sea to be body-guard, servant, and friend to the splendid, showy, selfish youth whom he worshipped; whose heartlessness he cloaked for many a long year, who lived upon his bounty, and who died in his arms, nursed with a tenderness surpassing that of a brother. And as far as I could find out, ingratitude and contempt had been his only reward.

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I need not tell you that when I repeated all this to my wife she ran to the old gentleman's room and told him all the things that I should not have known how to say—that we cared for him; that we wanted him to stay with us; that he was far, far more our uncle than the brilliant, unprincipled scapegrace who had died years before, dead for almost a lifetime to the family who idolized him; and that we wanted him to stay with us as long as kind heaven would let him. But it was of no use. A change had come over our aromatic uncle which we could both of us see, but could not understand. The duplicity of which he had been guilty weighed on his spirit. The next day he went out for his usual walk, and he never came back. We used every means of search and inquiry, but we never heard from him until we got this letter from Foo-choo-li:

"Dear Nephew and Niece: The present is to inform you that I am enjoying the Health that

might be expected at my Age and in my condition of Body, which is to say bad. I ship you by to-day's steamer, Pacific Monarch, four dozen jars of ginger, and two dozen ditto preserved oranges, to which I would have added some other Comfits, which I purposed offering for your acceptance, if it were not that my Physician has forbidden me to leave my Bed. In case of Fatal Results from this trying Condition, my Will, duly attested, and made in your favor, will be placed in your hands by Messrs. Smithson & Smithson, my Customs Brokers, who will also pay all charges on goods sent. The Health of this place being unfavorably affected by the Weather, you are unlikely to hear more from,

"Dear Nephew and Niece,
"Your affectionate
"UNCLE."

And we never did hear more—except for his will—from Our Aromatic Uncle; but our whole house still smells of his love.

THE ZADOC PINE LABOR UNION

WHEN Zadoc Pine's father died, Zadoc found himself alone in the North Woods, three miles from Silsbee's Station, twenty-one years old, six foot one inch high, in perfect health, with a good appetite. He had gone to school one summer; he could read and write fairly well, and could cipher very well. He had gone through the history of the United States, and he had a hazy idea of geography. When his father's estate was settled up, and all debts paid, Zadoc owned two silver dollars, the clothes he stood in, one extra flannel shirt, done up in a bandanna handkerchief in company with a razor, a comb, a toothbrush, and two collars. Besides these things he had a six-inch clasp-knife and an old-fashioned muzzle-loading percussion-cap rifle.

Old man Pine had been a good Adirondack guide in his time; but for the last six years he had been laid up, a helpless cripple, with inflammatory rheumatism. He and his son—old Pine's wife had died before the boy was ten years old—lived in their little house in the woods. The father had some small savings, and the son could earn a little as a sort of auxiliary guide. He got a job here and there where some party needed an extra man.

Zadoc was an excellent shot; but he was no fisherman, and he had little knowledge of the streams and ponds further in the woods.

So, when the old father was gone, when Zadoc had paid the last cent of his debt to the storekeeper at Silsbee's—the storekeeper taking the almost worthless shanty of the Pines in part payment—when he had settled with Silsbee's saw-mill for the boards out of which he himself had made his father's coffin, Zadoc Pine stood on the station platform and wondered what was going to become of him, or, rather, as he put it, "what he was a-going for to do with himself."

There was no employment for him at Silsbee's Station. He might, perhaps, get a job as guide; but it was doubtful, and he had seen too much of the life. It seemed to him a waste of energy. To live as his father had lived, a life of toil and exposure, a dreary existence of hard work and small profit, and to end at last penniless and in debt for food, was no part of Zadoc's plans. He knew from the maps in the old geography that the whole Adirondack region was only a tiny patch on the map of the United States. Somewhere outside there he was sure he would find a place for himself.

He knew that the little northern railroad at his feet connected with the greater roads to the south. But the great towns of the State were only so many names to him. His eyes were not turned toward New York. He had "guided" for parties of New York men, and he had learned enough to

make himself sure that New York was too large for him. "I wouldn't be no more good down there," he said to himself, "then they be up here. 'Tain't my size."

Yet somewhere he must go. He had watched the young men who employed him, and he had made up his mind to two things: First, these young men had money; second, he could get it if they could. One had jokingly shown him a hundred-dollar bill, and had asked him to change it. There was some part of the world, then, where people could be free and easy with hundred-dollar bills. Why was not that the place for him? "They know a lot more 'n I do," he said; "but they hed to l'arn it fust-off; an' I guess ef their brains was so everlastin' much better 'n mine they wouldn't souse 'em with whiskey the way they do."

As Zadoc Pine stood on the platform, feeling of the two silver dollars in his pocket, he saw the wagon drive up from Silsbee's saw-mill with a load of timber, and old Mr. Silsbee on top of the load. There was a train of flat cars on the siding, where it had been lying for an hour, waiting for the up train. When the wagon arrived, Mr. Silsbee, the station-master, and the engineer of the train had a three-cornered colloquy of a noisy sort. The station-master after awhile withdrew, shrugging his shoulders with the air of a man who declines to engage further in a profitless discussion.

"What's the matter?" asked Zadoc.

"That there lumber of Silsbee's," said the station-master, who was a New England man. "The

durned old cantankerous cuss is kickin' because he can't ship it. Why, this here train's so short o' hands they can't hardly run it ez 'tis, let alone loadin' lumber."

"Where's it goin' to?" inquired Zadoc, "an' why's this train short o' hands?"

"Goin' to South Ridge, Noo Jersey," said the station-master, "or 'twould be ef 'twan't for this blame strike. Can't get nobody to load it."

"Where's South Ridge?" was Zadoc's next inquiry.

"'Bout ten or twenty miles from Noo York."

"Country?"

"Country 'nough, I guess. Ask Silsbee."

Zadoc walked after Mr. Silsbee, who was by this time marching back towards the saw-mill, red in the face and puffing hard. Zadoc got in front of him.

"Mornin', Mr. Silsbee," he said.

"Mornin'—er—who are ye? Oh, Enoch Pine's boy, hey? Mornin', young man—I hain't got no time——"

"How much is it wuth to you to get them sticks to where they're goin' to?" demanded Zadoc.

"Wuth? It's wuth hundreds of dollars to me, young man—it's wuth——"

"Is it wuth a five-dollar bill?" Zadoc interrupted.

"Whatyermean?"

"You know me, Squire Silsbee. If it's wuth a five-dollar bill to get them timbers down to South Ridge, New Jersey, an' you can get that engineer

to take me on as an extra hand that far, I'll load 'em on, go down there with 'em, an' unload 'em. All I want's five dollars for my keep while I'm a-goin'."

"You don't want t' go to South Ridge?" gasped Mr. Silsbee.

"Yaas, I do."

"Whut fer?"

"Fer my health," said Zadoc. The squire looked at the muscular, sunburnt animal before him, and he had to grin.

"Well," he said, "'tain't none o' *my* business. You come along, an' I'll see if that pig-headed fool will let you work your way down."

One hour later Zadoc was rolling southward on a flat car, and learning how to work brakes as he went. It was a wonderful pleasure-trip to him. The work was nothing; he was strong as a bull moose; and he was simply enchanted to see the great world stringing itself out along the line of the railroad track. He had never in his life seen a settlement larger than Silsbee's, and when the villages turned into towns and the towns into cities, he was so much interested that he lost his appetite. He asked the train hands all the questions he could think of, and acquired some information, although they did not care to talk about much except the great strike and the probable action of the unions.

. . . . . .

It was about six o'clock of a cloudy May evening

when Zadoc Pine jumped off the car at South Ridge and helped to unload Mr. Silsbee's cargo of timber. The brakeman on his end of the train said, "So long!" Zadoc said "So long!" and the train whirled on to New York.

Zadoc stood by the track and gazed somewhat dismally after his travelling home. He was roused from something like a brown study when the station-master of South Ridge hailed him.

"Hi, country! where are you?"

"Is this New Jersey?" asked Zadoc.

"Yes. What did you thing it was—Ohio?"

Zadoc had heard something of the national reputation of the State from his late companions.

"Well," he reflected, "I must be pretty mildewed when a Jerseyman hollers 'country' at me."

Zadoc made this reflection aloud. The station master walked off with a growl, and two or three gentlemen who were talking on the platform laughed quietly. Zadoc walked up to one of them.

"I brung that lumber down here," he said; "I'd like to know who owns it. Maybe there's more job in it fer me?"

"I don't think so," one of the gentleman said, in a rather cold and distant way. "That is for the new station, and the railway company has its own hands."

Zadoc looked all about him. There was no town to be seen. He was among the foot-hills of the Orange Mountains, and on all sides of him were

undulating slopes, some open, some wooded. He saw old-fashioned farm-houses, and many more modern dwellings, of what seemed to him great size and beauty, although they were only ordinary suburban cottages of the better sort. But nowhere could he see shops or factories. There was a quarry high up on one of the slopes, but that was all. It looked like a poor place in which to seek for work.

"Well," he remarked, "maybe there's somewheres where I can put up fer to-night."

"What sort of place?" the gentleman asked.

"Well," said Zadoc, "some sort of inn, or tavern, or suthin', where I c'n get about ten cents' wuth o' style an' ninety cents' wuth o' sleep an' feed."

Two of the gentlemen laughed; but the one to whom Zadoc had spoken, who seemed a dignified and haughty person, answered in a chilly and discouraging way:

"Go down this street to the cross-roads, and ask for Bryan's. That is where the quarrymen board."

He turned away, and went in the other direction with his companions. Zadoc Pine shouldered his rifle, picked up the handkerchief which held his other belongings, and trudged down the road under the new foliage of the great chestnuts. He came in a little while to the cross-roads, where there were four huddled blocks of shabby square houses. There was a butcher's shop, a grocer's, a

baker's, three or four drinking-places, and Bryan's. This was the forlornest house of all. There was a dirty attempt at an ice-cream saloon in the front, and in the rear was a large room with a long table, where the quarrymen took their meals. When Zadoc arrived, the quarrymen were sitting on the sidewalk in front of the house with their feet in the gutter. They were smoking pipes and talking in a dull way among themselves. By the time that Zadoc had bargained for a room, with supper and breakfast, for one dollar, supper was announced, and they all came in. Zadoc did not like either his companions or his supper.

He did not know enough of the distinguishing marks of various nationalities to guess at the nativity of these men, but he knew that they were not Americans. He tried to talk to the man nearest him, but the man did not want to talk. Zadoc asked him about the work and the wages at the quarry.

"It's a dollar-twinty-five a day," the quarryman said, sullenly; "an' it's a shame! The union ain't doin' nothin' fer us. An' there ain't no more quarrymen wanted. There's Milliken, he owns the carrts; mebbe he'll take a driver. But if ye want a job, ye'll have to see McCuskey, the dilligate."

"What might a dilligate be?" inquired the young man from the North Woods.

"The mon what runs the union. Ye're a union mon, ain't ye?"

"Guess not," said Zadoc.

"Thin y'd best be out of this," the man said, rising rudely and lumbering off.

"Guess I won't wake McCuskey up in the mornin'," Zadoc thought; "dollar-'n-a-quarter's big money; but I don't want no sech work ez quarryin', ef it makes a dead log of a man like that."

He finished his meal and went into the street. Bryan was leaning against the door-jamb, conversing with a tall man on the sidewalk. It was the gentleman whom Zadoc had seen at the station.

"You can't get him this week, Mr. Thorndyke," said Bryan. "Bixby's ahead of you, and the Baxters. They been waitin' three weeks for him. Fact is, Andy don't want to do no more th'n two days' work in a week."

"Can't you think of any other man?" Mr. Thorndyke queried, irritably. "Here I have been waiting for this fellow a whole fortnight to dig a half-dozen beds in my garden, and I don't believe he intends to come. There ought to be somebody who wants the job. Can't some of these men here come after hours, or before, and do it? I pay well enough for the work."

There was no movement among the quarrymen, who were once more sitting on the edge of the sidewalk, with their feet in the gutter.

"I don't know of no one, Mr. Thorndyke," said Bryan, and Mr. Thorndyke turned back up the road.

"Diggin' garden-beds?" mused Zadoc. "I

ain't never dug no garden-beds; but I hev dug fer bait, 'n' I guess the principle's the same—on'y you don't hev to sort out the wums." He walked rapidly after Mr. Thorndyke, and overtook him.

"Don't you want me to dig them beds fer you?" he inquired.

"*Can* you dig them?" Mr. Thorndyke looked surprised and suspicious.

"That's what I'm here fer."

"Do you know where my house is? The third on the hill?"

"Third she is," said Zadoc.

"Come up to-morrow morning."

Zadoc went back to Bryan's and went to bed in a narrow, close room, overlooking an ill-kept back yard. It was dirty, it was cheerless; worst of all, it was airless. Zadoc's mind was made up. "Ef this suits quarrymen, quarryin' don't suit me."

. . . . . .

He had a bad night, and arose at five the next morning. At six he went to a breakfast that was worse than the supper had been. Zadoc had been used to poor and coarse fare all his life, but there was something about this flabby, flavorless, greasy, boarding-house food that went against him. He ate what he could, and then walked up the road toward Mr. Thorndyke's house. As he went higher up the hill he saw that the houses at the cross-roads were very much unlike their surroundings. To a man born and brought up in the skirts of the North Woods, this New Jersey village seemed a very

paradise. The green lawns amazed him; the neat fences, the broad roads, the great trees, standing clear of underbrush, were all marvels in his eyes. And besides the comfortable farm-houses and the mansions of the rich and great, he saw many humbler dwellings of a neat and well-ordered sort. From one of these a pretty girl, standing in the doorway, with her right arm in a sling, looked at him with curiosity, and what Zadoc took to be kindly interest. It was really admiration. If Zadoc had ever thought to enquire, he would have learned that he was not only big, but good-looking.

He lingered a little as he passed this place, to admire it. The house had two stories, of which the lower was of rough stone, brightly whitewashed. In front was a bit of a garden, in which green things were sprouting. In the little woodshed, to one side, a neat old woman, with pretty, white hair, was cutting kindling-wood. The girl in the doorway was very pretty, if her arm *was* in a sling. Zadoc looked it all over with entire approval. "That's *my* size," he thought.

He found no one awake at Mr. Thorndyke's house, and he sat on the front steps until half-past seven o'clock, when Mr. Thorndyke himself came out to get the morning paper, which had been left on the front porch. Zadoc had read it through already.

"You are early," was Mr. Thorndyke's greeting.

"I was earlier when I come," returned Zadoc. "Been here more'n an hour. Awful waste o'

God's sunlight, when there's work a-waitin'."

"Well," said Mr. Thorndyke coldly, as he led the way around the corner of the house, "here are the beds. The lines are pegged out. I suppose there is about a day's work on them, and I will pay you at the usual rate for gardeners' work, hereabouts—a dollar and a half."

"Yaas," said Zadoc, as he looked over the territory staked out, "I see. But if this job's wuth a dollar-'n'-a-half to you, I'd ruther take it *ez* a job, at them figgers. I *can* fool away a day on it, ef that'll please you better; but I'd ruther git through with it when I git through, ef it's all the same to you."

"I don't care how you do it," Mr. Thorndyke said, "so long as it is done, and done properly, when I come home to-night at six."

"You needn't put off coming home for me," was Zadoc's cheerful assurance.

Then he proceeded to ask Mr. Thorndyke a number of questions about the manner in which the beds were to be dug. Mr. Thorndyke knit his brows.

"Haven't you ever dug beds before?"

"I never dug no beds fer *you*. When I do work fer a man I do it to suit him, an' not to suit some other feller."

"How do I know that you can do the work at all?"

"You don't," said Zadoc, frankly; "but ef 'tain't satisfactory you don't hev to pay. *Thet's* cheap fer a hole in the ground."

"Have you a spade?" Mr. Thorndyke demanded, and his manner was depressingly stern.

"No, I ain't," said Zadoc, "but I'll git one."

. . . . . .

Zadoc walked up to the next house on the hill, which was a large and imposing structure. It belonged to the richest man in South Ridge, and the richest man was sitting on his front porch.

"Got a spade to lend?" Zadoc asked.

"What do you want it for?" the richest man demanded.

"Fer a job down there to Squire Thorndyke's, next door," Zadoc informed him.

"Did Mr. Thorndyke send you?"

"No, I come myself."

The millionaire of South Ridge stared at Zadoc for a moment, and then arose, walked around the house, and presently reappeared with a spade. "When you bring this back," he said, "give it to the man in the stable."

"Much obliged!" said Zadoc.

The beds were all dug before three o'clock, and Mrs. Thorndyke came out and expressed her approval. Zadoc took off his hat and bowed, as his father had told him he should do when he met a lady.

"I see," he remarked, "you've got some mornin'-glories set out alongside o' the house. Ef you'll get me a ladder an' some string, an' nails an' a hammer, I'll train 'em up fer yer."

Mrs. Thorndyke looked doubtful.

"I don't know what arrangement my husband has made with you," she began; but Zadoc interrupted her.

"There ain't nothin' to pay fer that, ma'am. One pertater on top 'f the measure don't break no one, and it kinder holds trade."

The ladder and the other things were brought out, and Zadoc climbed up and fastened the strings as he had seen them arranged for the morning-glories that climbed up the walls of Squire Silsbee's house.

While he was on the ladder, the rich man next door, whose name, by the way, was Vredenburg, came down and leaned on the fence and talked to Mrs. Thorndyke.

"Getting the place in good trim, aren't you?"

"Trying to," said Mrs. Thorndyke. "There are ever so many things to do. I've sent to three men already, to cart my ash-heap away, and they won't come. There's a wandering gardener here who has just dug my beds; if it hadn't been for him, I should have gone without flowers all the summer."

Zadoc heard this and grinned; and then he began to think. He had been looking over toward the quarry during the day, and he had noticed that the horses stood idle a large part of the time. There was one tall gray hitched to a cart, whose business it was to remove the small stones and waste, and who did not make one trip an hour, resting for the greater part of the time under a huge tree.

"That horse ain't too tired," thought Zadoc, "to give a feller a lift after workin' hours."

By four o'clock the strings were up for the morning-glories. Mr. Thorndyke would not return before six. Zadoc strolled down to the quarry and found Milliken. He asked Milliken what would be a proper charge for the services of the big gray horse for two hours after six o'clock. Milliken thought fifty cents would pay him and the horse. Then Zadoc continued his stroll, and found out that the dumping-grounds of South Ridge were near the river, among the tailings of an abandoned quarry.

After that he went back to Bryan's and got a couple of eggs cooked for his private supper. He had had his dinner at the noon hour, and it was worse than the breakfast. The eggs were, as he told Mr. Bryan, "kinder 'twixt grass and hay." He felt that he had had enough of Bryan's.

Going up the road to Mr. Thorndyke's, he came to the neat little house that he had noticed the night before; he looked at it for a minute, and then he went in and asked the white-haired old woman if she did not want to take him as a boarder. She said that she did not; she was a lone widow-woman, and she had all she could do to pay her way with doing washing, and she didn't want no quarrymen fooling around her house; she knew what quarrymen were.

Zadoc explained to her that he was not a quarryman. He told her all about himself, and about his dissatisfaction with Bryan's arrangements; but

she only shook her head and said that she didn't want him. He was going out of the door, when the young girl who had smiled on him yesterday, and who had been listening in a corner, came forward and spoke earnestly to the old woman.

"He *looks* good, mother," Zadoc heard her say; "and it's to his credit that he don't like Bryan's. If he's a decent man, we oughtn't to send him back to a place like that. It's a shame for a young man to be left among those people."

The old woman wavered. "We might try him," she said.

Zadoc came back.

"You try me, and you'll keep me," said he. "An' ez fer you, young woman, ef you use ez much judgment when you pick out a husband ez you do when you choose a boarder, you'll do first-rate." The young woman blushed.

Then they talked about the proper price of Zadoc's board, and they all agreed that two dollars a week would be fair. Zadoc paid down the two dollars in advance, and was without a cent in the world, for Bryan had taken his other dollar for the two bad meals. But Zadoc did not mind that, and within fifteen minutes he had moved his possessions into a clean little whitewashed room in the second story of the widow Dadd's house. The widow was much troubled at the sight of his rifle; but she finally consented to let it hang on his white wall; and Zadoc ate his supper, although he had eaten one already, and made the meal as cheerful as he could to Mrs. Dadd and her daughter, which

was not difficult to him, for it was a good supper. A little before six he marched off to Mr. Thorndyke's.

Mr. Thorndyke paid him his dollar and a half; and Zadoc broached a new project.

"There's that there ash-heap o' yourn," he said, "why can't I cart that off fer you?"

"But you haven't a cart," Mr. Thorndyke objected.

"I'll have one," Zadoc said. "What's the job wuth?"

"I've always paid a dollar."

Zadoc rubbed his chin and mused. "I'll call on ye for thet dollar when I've earned it," he said. "Evenin'!"

Zadoc had been at the back of the house during the day, and had sized up the ash-heap, as well as one or two other things. He walked down to the quarry and got the big gray and his cart, and drove up to the Thorndykes' back yard. There he shovelled the ash-heap (the shovel went with the horse and cart) into the vehicle. There was just one load. There had been a heavy rain during the night, and the ashes were packed close. The cart held a cubic yard, and it was not overloaded when Zadoc drove it down the road toward the old quarry.

As he drove he looked ahead, and he noticed that the sidewalks, or raised paths to right and left of the road, were made of ashes pounded down—not cinders from the railroad, but ordinary hard-coal ashes, beaten into a compact mass. Before he had

driven half a mile he saw, some hundred feet in front of him, a broad break in the sidewalk to his right—a gully washed out by the rain. He stopped his horse behind a clump of trees, alighted, and walked forward to the gate in front of a comfortable house. The owner was pottering about, looking at the vines that were beginning to climb up the wires on his veranda. Zadoc accosted him.

"Evenin'! You've got a bad hole in that there path o' yourn."

"Are you a road-inspector?" asked the man of the house, in a disagreeable tone of voice.

"No," said Zadoc, "I'm a road-mender. You've got ter fill that hole up. S'pose I fill it up fer you fer fifty cents?"

"Yer ain't going to drive out here and mend that walk for half a dollar, are you?" the man asked, incredulously.

"I'm a-goin' to take it on my reggleler rowt," replied Zadoc. "Does she go?"

The man looked over the fence at the big hole. "She goes," he said.

It was just one hour later, when some light lingered in the sky, that the householder with the broken sidewalk paid Zadoc Pine his fifty cents. He paid it with a dazed look on his face; but Zadoc was as bright and airy as usual as he pocketed the money and drove back to the quarry-stables. His cubic yard of ashes had filled the gap and left a little over, with which he had patched a few smaller breaks.

When Zadoc arose on the morrow and stepped

out of doors to breathe the morning air, he saw the white-haired widow chopping kindling-wood in the shed.

"That ain't no work fer you," he said.

"Who's to do it?" the widow asked; "my darter, her arm's lame. She lamed it snatchin' a child off the railroad-track in front of the engyne. The engyne hit her. It was one o' them delegate's children, an' no thanks to nobody. Who's to chop kindlin' if I don't?"

"I be, I reckon," said Zadoc. He took the hatchet out of her hands and split up a week's supply. It was sharp work on an empty stomach; but he took it out of the breakfast, a little later.

After breakfast he walked down to Centre, the nearest large town, and spent an hour in a paint-shop there. He asked a great many questions, and the men in the shop had a good deal of fun with him. Zadoc knew it, but he did not care. "Amooses them, don't hurt me, an' keeps the derned fools talkin'," he said to himself.

He returned to South Ridge in time for dinner, and in the afternoon sallied out to look for a job. Remembering the Bixbys and the Baxters, and the fact that "Andy" did not care for more than two days' work in the week, Zadoc thought he would offer his services to the two families. "Thar' ain't no room in this world," he reflected, "for two-day men. The six-day men has first call on all jobs."

The Bixbys gave him the work, and paid him a dollar for the afternoon's work; but he could not

come to terms with the Baxters. They wanted him to take fifty cents for half a day's work.

"But you'd 'a' had ter pay that there other feller a dollar," Zadoc objected.

"But that's different," said Mrs. Baxter; "you aren't a regular gardener, you know."

"The job ain't different," replied Zadoc; "and ef Andy c'n get a dollar fer it, I'm a-goin' to let him have it." And he shook his long legs down the road.

He loomed up, long and bony, before Mr. Thorndyke just after dinner.

"You've come to cart the ash-heap away, I suppose?" Mr. Thorndyke said.

"That ash-heap moved out of town last evenin'. Ef you've got time, though, I want yer to step around to the back o' the house. Got somethin' to show yer."

The "something" was Mr. Thorndyke's barn. He kept no horse; but the small building that goes with every well-regulated cottage in New Jersey he utilized as a play-room for his children and a gymnasium for himself.

"That there barn," Zadoc told him, "is jest a sight to look at. It stands to the north o' the house, an' takes all the weather there is. The paint's most off it. Look at these here big scales! I took one of those there fer a sample, and here's the color, the way it ought to be, on this here bit o' shingle." Zadoc pulled the sample out of his pocket. "Now you wanter let me *paint* that barn for yer. I've figgered thet it'll cost yer jest

twenty-five dollars. Thet's a savin' for *you,* an' I c'n take my time about it, and put in a week on the job an' do some other work round the town at the same time."

"Have you other engagements?" Mr. Thorndyke asked.

"No," was Zadoc's answer; "but I'm goin' to hev 'em."

"But do you know how to paint?"

"Anythin' the matter with my gardenin'?"

"No."

"All right on ash-heaps, ain't I?"

"I suppose so."

"Well, you jest try me on paint. Same old terms—no satisfaction, no pay. I can't make that there barn look wuss'n it does now; an' I'm goin' ter make it look a heap better."

The next afternoon Zadoc was painting the Thorndyke barn. He worked there only in the afternoons; in the mornings he hunted up odd jobs about the town, and the money he got for these he took to Centre and invested in paint and brushes. As he paid cash, he had to buy in small quantities; but when the barn was painted—and it was painted to Mr. Thorndyke's satisfaction—Zadoc found himself something more like a capitalist than he had ever been in his life.

But there was one unpleasant incident connected with this job. He was sitting one afternoon in the children's swing, which he had borrowed to use in painting those parts of the barn which he could not reach with a ladder: he tied the ends of the

ropes around the cupola, twisted himself up to the ridge-pole, and untwisted himself as he painted downward. He was slathering away on his second coat, whistling cheerily to himself, when a man in overalls and a painty jacket came up and made some remarks about the weather. Zadoc told him that the weather was a good thing to take as it came; and then the man inquired:

"Do you belong to the union?"

"What union?" asked Zadoc; "I ain't no Canuck, ef thet's what yer mean."

"The house-painters' union," said the man.

"Well, no," said Zadoc, still slathering away, with his head on one side. "Guess I'm union enough, all by myself. I'm perfec'ly united, I am —all harmonious and unanimous an' comfortable."

"What are you a-paintin' for, then?" demanded the stranger.

"Fer money," said Zadoc. "What are you a-foolin' around here for?"

"Have you ever served an apprenticeship to this business?" the man asked.

"Hev you ever served an apprenticeship ter rollin' off a log?" Zadoc asked, by way of answer.

The man muttered something and moved away. Zadoc communed with himself.

"Ap-prenticeship ter sloppin' paint! Well, I be derned! Why, fool-work like thet's born in a man, same's swimmin'."

. . . . . .

As Zadoc became known to the community he found that work came right to his hand. The laboring native of South Ridge was the sort of man who said, when a job was offered to him, "Well, I guess I'll take a day off some time week arter next and 'tend to it." This energetic person from the North Woods, who made engagements and kept them, was a revelation to the householders of the town. He mended fences and roads; he cut grass and sodded lawns; he put in panes of glass and whitewashed kitchens; he soldered leaky refrigerators and clothes-boilers; he made paths and dug beds; he beat carpets and pumped water into garret tanks—in short, he did everything that a man can do with muscle and intelligent application. He was not afraid to do a thing because he had never done it before.

Moreover, he made his services acceptable by doing, as a rule, more than his contract called for. He was not above treating his employers as so many fellow human beings. When the doctor prescribed wild-cherry cordial for Mrs. Thorndyke, Zadoc put in a whole afternoon in scouring the country for wild cherries, and brought back a large basketful. He would take no pay.

"Them's with my compliments," he said. "They growed wild, an' I guess they growed wild a-puppus. Knowed thar was sick folks a-needin' of 'em, mebbe."

. . . . . .

But it was not to be all plain sailing for Zadoc.

One evening he went home to the widow Dadd's, and found the widow in tears and her daughter flushed and indignant. They told him that a "boycott" had been declared against him for doing union men's work, and against them for harboring him. The butcher of the town, who was also the green-grocer, would sell Mrs. Dadd nothing more until she turned Zadoc out of doors. Centre was the nearest town from which she could get supplies, and Centre was three miles away.

Zadoc walked over to the butcher's shop. The butcher was a German.

"What's this here, Schmitzer?" he demanded. "Ain't my money good enough fer you?"

"I ken't help it, Mr. Pine," said Schmitzer, sullenly. "If I don' boygott you, dem fellis boygott me. I got noddin' against you, Mr. Pine, but I ken't sell yon no mead, nor Mrs. Tatt neider."

"Runnin' me out of town, are ye?" Zadoc said. "Well, we run men out whar I come from. But we don't run 'em out unless they've *done* suthin', an' they don't let 'emselves be run out onless they've done suthin'. I ain't done nothin' but what I ought, an' I'm a-goin' ter stay here."

He went back to the widow Dadd's, and told her that he would take charge of the commissariat. That night he got a large packing-case, which Mr. Vredenburg was quite willing to give him, and a barrow-load of saw-dust from the waste-heap at the saw-mill. After an hour's work he had a fairly good ice-box, and by the next night he had that box filled with ice from Centre and with meat

and vegetables from New York. Zadoc read the papers; he had seen the market reports, and now he was able to determine, by actual experiment, the difference between South Ridge prices and New York market prices. He discovered that the difference was very nearly forty per cent. The express company's charge for transportation was forty cents for an ordinary flour-barrel well packed.

Zadoc saw a new vista opening before him. He called on Mr. Thorndyke, and proposed to do that stately person's marketing, and to divide the forty per cent. profit evenly between them. Mr. Thorndyke was at first doubtful and suspicious. He cross-examined Zadoc, and found out what had started the young man on this new line. Then his manners changed. Mr. Thorndyke was not in the habit of carrying himself very graciously toward those whom he considered his social inferiors. But now he grasped Zadoc's hand and shook it heartily.

"I'm glad to know this, Pine," he said. "If you've got the pluck to fight those cowardly brutes and their boycott, I'll stand by you. You may try your hand at the marketing, and if you suit Mrs. Thorndyke, all right. If you don't, we'll find something else for you to do."

Zadoc went in town on the morrow with a list of Mrs. Thorndyke's domestic needs. He had, on his previous visit, sought out the venders who dealt in only one quality of goods, and that the best. To these, in his ignorance of the details of

marketing, he thought it best to apply, although their higher prices diminished his profits. In this way he was able to send home a full week's supply of the best meat and vegetables in the market. They proved to be better than Schmitzer's best, and Mr. Thorndyke paid a bill smaller by one-fifth than he had ever received from Schmitzer. Zadoc was only forty-three cents to the good; but he had made his point. Within one month he was buying for ten families, and receiving the blessing of ten weary housewives, who found it easier to sit down of a Friday night, lay out a bill of fare for a week, and hand it to Zadoc Pine with a tranquil dismissal of all further care, than it had been to meet every recurring morning the old, old question, What shall we have for dinner to-day? And Zadoc found his profit therein.

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One warm evening in September, Zadoc Pine sat in the front yard of the widow Dadd's house, whittling a plug for the cider-barrel. He looked up from his whittling and saw a party of a dozen men come up the road and stop at the gate. He arose and went forward to meet them.

"Good-evenin', friends!" he said, driving his jack-knife into the top rail of the fence and leaning over the pickets: "Want to see me, I s'pose? What c'n I do fer ye?"

One man came forward and put himself at the head of the party. Zadoc knew him by sight. It was McCuskey, the "walking-delegate."

"You can get out of this town," said McCuskey, "as fast as you know how to. We'll give you ten hours."

"That's friendly-like," said Zadoc. "I ain't had a present o' ten hours' free time made me since I wuz a boy at school."

"Well," McCuskey broke in, annoyed at some suppressed laughter in his rear, "you can take them ten hours and use them to get out of South Ridge."

"Ken, eh?" said Zadoc. "Well, now, ef I've gotter go, I've gotter go. I ain't got no objection. But I jest wanter know *what* I've gotter go fer. Then maybe I'll see if I'll go or not."

"You have got to go," McCuskey began, "because you have interfered with the inalienable rights of labor; because you have taken the bread out of the mouths of honest toilers——"

"Sho!" Zadoc interrupted him, "don't talk no sech fool-talk ez that! I ain't taken no bread outer no man's mouth. I ain't got down to that yet. S'pose you tell me in plain English what I've done to be run outer town fer?"

There was more hushed laughter in the spokesman's rear, and he set his teeth angrily before he opened his lips again.

"You have no trade, and you have taken jobs away from men who have trades. You took away a painter's job when you painted that barn on the hill."

"I didn't take away no painter's job. It wasn't nobody's job—it wasn't no job at all until I made

a job of it. Ef the painter wanted it, why didn't he go an' get it?"

"You've took away Andy Conner's gardening-work all around the town."

"Tha's so!" from Andy Conner, at the back of the crowd.

"Where was Andy Conner when I took his jobs away from him?" Zadoc asked, and answered himself: "Drunk, in Bryan's back yard. Andy Conner works two days in the week, an' I work six. I ain't got no time to be sortin' out Andy Conner's jobs from mine."

Then there came a husky howl from out the thickest of the crowd.

"Vell, you take avay my chob, anyhow! You take my bissness avay—you take my boocher bissness."

"Ah!" said Zadoc, "that's you, Schmitzer, is it? Yes, ye're right. I'm takin' yer job away—the best I know how. But I didn't take it away until you took the food outer my mouth—thet's what ye did, an' no fancy talk, neither—an' outer the mouths o' two helpless wimmin. An' under them circumstances, every time, I'd take your job away, ef you was the President of the United States."

This was a solemn asseveration for Zadoc. He respected the office of the President of the United States. But it was lost on his hearers. No man in that crowd respected the President of the United States. There came a low, growling murmur from the group:

"Kill him! Hang the scab! Kill him!"

"Kill?"

Zadoc let out a voice that only the Adirondack hills had heard before. Then he checked himself, and talked quietly, yet so that every man on the street heard him.

"I came from the North Woods," he said. "They make *men* whar I came from. I ain't wronged no man in this town. I come here to make my livin', an' here I'll stay. Ef you wanter fight, I'll fight yer, one at a time, or the hull gang! Ye can kill me, but ye've gotter kill me *here*. An' ef it comes ter killin', I c'n hold my end up. I c'n kill a rabbit at forty rod, an' I own my rifle yit. But I know ye won't give me no fair fight; ye want to crawl up behind me. Well, I'm a man from the woods. I c'n hear ye half a mile off, an' I c'n *smell* ye a hundred yards."

He made an end, and stood looking at them. He had picked up his big jack-knife, and was jabbing its blade deep into the top rail of the fence and picking it out again. A silence fell upon the crowd. Zadoc Pine was a large man and a strong man. He had a knife, and in the doorway behind him stood the widow Dadd's daughter with his rifle, held ready for him.

Zadoc broke the silence.

"Boys," he said, "I ain't no hog. I want you to understand thet I'm goin' to earn my own livin' my own way. I take what work I c'n get; an' ef other folks is shif'less enough ter leave their work

fer me ter do, that's *their* business. I've took one man's job away from him fer cause. But I ain't got no spite ag'in him. He's on'y a fool-furriner. Thet's you, Schmitzer. An' ter show you that I ain't got no spite agin yer, I'm a-goin' ter make you an offer. I'll take yer inter partnership."

There was a derisory laugh at this from the whole delegation, but Zadoc checked it.

"Schmitzer," he said, "you come inside here and talk it over with me. I ain't goin' to hurt ye, an' yer friends here'll go down street ter Bryan's an' take a drink. They've been a-talkin', an' I guess they're thirsty."

After a moment of irresolute hesitation the delegation moved off. The men were puzzled. The exiling of Zadoc Pine seemed no longer a simple matter, and they felt the need of discussing a new situation. Zadoc and Schmitzer were left together in the little stone house.

"Schmitzer," said Zadoc, "I'm makin' most as much clean profit outer my ten families ez you're makin' out of yer whole business, an' I don't have no rent t' pay. Here's my figgers—look 'em over. Now, Schmitzer, thar's no end of business hereabouts thet you ain't worked up. These farmers all around about are livin' on salt pork, an' eatin' butchers' meat wunst a week. We've gotter get their trade and teach 'em Christian livin'. These here quarrymen ain't eatin' meat like they oughter. S'pose we show 'em what they c'n get for a dollar?"

Schmitzer looked carefully over Zadoc's figures. He knew the risks of carrying perishable stock. He saw that people bought more when the opportunities of the great markets were offered to them. Before he left the house he had agreed to work with Zadoc, and to follow his leader in the new scheme for supplying South Ridge with meat and vegetables.

"An' what'll yer friends down street say?" queried Zadoc.

"I don' care vot dey say," responded Schmitzer; "dose fellus ain't no good. I got better bissness now. If dey don' like it, dey go down to Cendre un' bring deir meat home demselfs."

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Zadoc retains his share in the Pine & Schmitzer Supply Company; but after he had drummed up the local trade on the new basis, and broken Schmitzer into the routine work, he branched off for himself in a new line.

He had found an amateur electrician among his customers, and with this gentleman's aid he organized the South Ridge Fire Department and Protective Association. Thirty-six householders paid him ten dollars for the plant and ten dollars for yearly service; and he connected their houses in an electric circuit, of which his own bedroom was the central station. In each house was a combined bell and alarm; and if a citizen awoke at night to find his chimney on fire or to hear a

stranger within his chickenhouse, he rang a wild tocsin in thirty-five other houses, and then sounded a signal-letter by dot and dash to proclaim his identity. Then the whole town turned out, and Zadoc drove a small chemical engine behind Schmitzer's horse. If the cause of the disturbance was a chicken-thief, and the cause was caught, Zadoc played upon him.

"Can't bring out that engyne fer nothin'," he said; "she's gotter serve a moral purpose somehow."

Two years and a half have passed since Zadoc left the North Woods. He is an employer now, and an owner of real-estate, in a small way, and he still has South Ridge under his protecting wing, and keeps her yards clean and her lawns trim—or his men do. Moreover, he is the husband of the girl whose smile first welcomed him to the Ridge.

"Man must earn his bread in the sweat of his brow," he has said; "but some men sweat inside o' their heads an' some outside. I'm workin' my brain. I could 'a' done more with it ef I'd 'a' had edication. When that there boy o' mine gets a few years on top o' the six weeks he's got now, I'll give him all he wants, an' he c'n do the swaller-tail business ef he wants to. Thet goes with edication."

"You have done much for the town, Mr. Pine," the Dominie once said to him, "and I am glad to say that your success has been due to the applica-

tion of sound principles—those principles on which true success has ever been founded."

"Yaas," said Zadoc, meditatively, "an' then—I'm an Amerikan, an' I guess thet goes fer suthin'."

NATURAL SELECTION

A ROMANCE OF CHELSEA VILLAGE AND EAST HAMPTON TOWN

PART I

CHELSEA Village has never had the aggressive exclusiveness of Greenwich. It exists to-day, and vaguely knows itself by name, close to the heart of the great city that has swallowed it up; but it is in nowise such a distinct entity as the brave little tangle of crooked streets a few blocks to the south. Greenwich has always been Greenwich, and the Ninth Ward has been the centre of civilization to the dwellers therein. But Chelsea has tried to be fashionable, has opened its doors to foreign invaders, and has even had an attack of Anglomania, and branched out into Terraces in the true London style. And so it has lost homogeneity and originality, and it has only a peculiar and private air of ambitionless and uninviting gloom to set it apart as a special quarter of New York. But Chelsea certainly does look like the inhabitants of its own boarding-houses—most respectable people, who have only tried too hard at

elegant gentility for their own comfort or prosperity. And the place has one other strong individuality. I do not know that there are very many ailanthus-trees in Chelsea; but there is, to me, a pervading odor of that gruesome exotic in all the streets, and I think an imaginative person might detect the smell even in the midwinter blasts that howl up from the North River.

Contemplation of one Chelsea street had a depressing effect upon Miss Celia Leete, as she sat by her window at five o'clock of a summer Saturday afternoon. Her room was in the front of a third story of a comfortable white wooden house, one of a little squad that stood well back from the street, the first two stories all but hidden by green-latticed verandas.

Miss Celia Leete looked through the thin and dusty leaves of the horse-chestnut-tree on the sidewalk, and her gaze roved idly up and down the line of boarding-houses across the way. They were boarding-houses with certain aspirations. They had also high stoops and elaborate cast-iron balconies. Yet, somehow, they did not look like even the second-cousins of those lordlier structures within the sacred one block's space east and west from Fifth Avenue. Perhaps this was partly because right next to them came the little tailor's shop, red brick, painted redder yet, ten feet wide and one story high, with the German tailor's wife forever standing in the doorway, holding her latest baby in her bare red arms.

The children of shabby and not over-clean gen-

tility were playing in shrill-voiced chorus on the sidewalk in front of the high-stoop houses. Occasionally one of them would recognize a home-returning father, and, without pausing in the merry round of Spanish Fly or Par, would give his parent the hail of easy equality, "H'lo, Pa."

The heads of families in the boarding-house colony were sometimes employed in the wholesale houses down-town; but oftener were clerks or floor-walkers in large dry-goods shops, or proprietors of smaller establishments on the West-side avenues. One of these gentlemen arrived at his domicile as Miss Celia Leete looked out of her window. He mechanically took his night-key from his pocket, but he replaced it, for the door was open, and most of the ladies of the house were disposed about the steps, in all the finery that "bargain counters" of Fourteenth Street could furnish. Then this conversation fell sharply upon the dull and sultry air:

"Why, Mr. Giddens, that you? Early to-night, ain't you? Wasn't it awful hot down-town?"

By a delicate convention of the place, even the boarder who was in charge of the Gents' Furnishing Goods Department of Messrs. Sonnenschein & Regenschirm, a mile up Eighth Avenue, was supposed to transact his business "down-town."

"Hot enough for *me* [a responsive ripple of merriment]. I ain't a hog, Miss Seavey. Why, Miss Wicks, *you* down again? Haven't seen you in three days. Quite a stranger. How's the neuralger?"

"Better now, thank you, Mr. Giddens; but I had an awfle siege of it this time. I was most afraid to show myself, I've run down so."

"*I*dersed you'd run up, 'stid 'f down. Never saw you lookin' better."

"Oh, Mr. Giddens, you're so gal*lant!* I wonder your wife ain't jealous of you, you're so gal*lant* to all the ladies. There, you go right along to her, or she'll say somethin' to me, I know she will." And with a gentle push, and amid much tittering, Mr. Giddens disappeared in the dark door-way.

Celia Leete turned from her window. She was sick of life, of the place, of herself—of something, she could not quite tell what.

And yet her ailment was common enough, and simple enough, and she defined her longing sufficiently well when she said to herself, as she sometimes did, "I wish I was some one else."

It would not require a profound psychologist, knowing who and what Miss Celia Leete was, and knowing also that she had spent one year of the most purely formative period of her young life in a semi-fashionable boarding-school, to deduce from this statement a general idea of what manner of person Miss Celia Leete wished to be, could she be some one other than herself.

Miss Celia Leete was the younger daughter of David Leete, the manufacturer of the once famous "William Riley" baking-powder. There was no levity prepense in the peculiar suggestiveness of this name. Mr. Leete had perhaps never heard of the Celtic lover who of old time was bidden by his

aristocratic lady love to "rise up" and accompany her to "far Amerikey." But he had bought the receipt for his excellent baking-powder from a clever young Irishman who chanced to be a namesake of the lovelorn emigrant whose tale is told in immortal verse, and he loyally gave the inventor due credit, and stood upon his own merits as an honest manufacturer. It was long ago, in the earlier days of baking-powder, that David Leete put the "William Riley" on the market. It was a great success among those first adventurous housewives who were heretical enough to shake off the thralldom of yeast. Of later years, other baking-powders had crowded between it and the great baking public, yet it still sold much as it had at first, when hundreds only, instead of thousands, put faith in the fermenting powers of the new discovery. The adventurous housewives of the first generation had grown old and conservative, and they clung to the William Riley powder, and thought ill of those giddy young matrons who dallied with more modern compounds.

So David Leete was well-to-do. He might have lived in a much finer house than the white frame cottage; but that was the first house he had ever bought, and thence he had ordered that he should be borne when the time came for him to leave New York forever. For even the truest old New Yorker must now go into exile with Death, and lie down at last in a Brooklyn cemetery or far up in trim Woodlawn.

From the old house, then, he walked to his Hous-

ton Street factory every morning at eight o'clock. It had been six o'clock in the baking-powder's first days of struggle, and then it had been seven, and half-past seven, and now that his son Alonzo was old enough to look after the business, he was thinking of making it nine. At half-past twelve he came back for dinner; at six he was at home, in his shirt-sleeves and his big slippers, waiting for supper with a good appetite and a clear conscience.

Mr. Leete had a better appetite for his supper than his younger daughter could often muster up. By six o'clock, as a general thing, the day had grown very heavy to this young lady, and she was not tempted by the cold meat, the hot biscuit, the cake and the tea which were good enough for her father and her mother, her brother Alonzo and her sister Dorinda, more commonly called Dodie or Doe.

But then there were many things that Celia did not fancy, in spite of the fact that the rest of the family liked them. Such strange differences of taste will occasionally occur in even the most conservatively regulated households—and the standard-bearer of a new school of domestic ethics has to suffer, as a rule. Were we not well abreast with the world when last we took our bearings, some twenty or thirty years ago? Are we to set our sails now to suit these saucy chits whom we ourselves brought into the world? What was right in our time is right for all time, and there's an end of it.

Celia did not, however, suffer martyrdom be-

cause of any ideas which may have stimulated her young imagination. Her mother said she was "a peaky, Miss Nancy sort of a fussy child, not 'tall like Popper Leete, nor like my own folks, neither." Father Leete thought sometimes that she had been "spilte by that highty-tighty boardin'-school." Dorinda considered her "awfle queer," and wished she were "like the other girls," and Alonzo silently disapproved of her ways and manners—saying once, in fact, that he thought she had too many of the latter. Yet they all loved her and indulged and petted her. They did not understand her, of course; but then there was no necessity of understanding her. Children are fanciful, and Celia was still the child of the house.

And although these quoted utterances told, in a broad way, the truth about Celia's differences with the family standard of ethics, it is safe to say that no member of the household had anything like a realizing sense of that truth. If they perceived in the young woman an unwise and futile ambition, they misapprehended the nature of the ambition itself, and pictured the aspirant as desirous merely of those material things the possession of which represented to them social superiority. If they had been asked to put their ideas in words, they would have said that Celia wished to live in a house on Fifth Avenue, to drive on that thoroughfare in a fine carriage, to give balls, and to dance the german, whatever that was, and to have her name in the *Home Journal* every week. And, doubtless, these things were all in Celia's list of vague de-

sires; but also her heart yearned after a certain something which sometimes goes with these things, which yet she knew was not hers by birth—whereas the notion that there was any difference in human quality between themselves and the haughtiest of the people in what was called society had never entered into the head of any living Leete until Celia was sent to a boarding-school in the Orange Mountains, the year that they thought her lungs were weak.

The Leetes had, like other folks, their own little foot-rule to measure the world with, and they used it with stern and unimaginative justice. They measured all people with it—king and clodhopper, poet and peasant. If you fell below what they held to be proper stature of man, they might recognize you in your place as a fellow-mortal and a factor in the affairs of life; but they would have none of you socially. If you touched the exact mark, you were a "gentleman" or a "lady," as the case might be. If—by mischance—you rose above that fixed line—why, there was something wrong about you, that was sure; at the best, you were *queer,* and *queer* was a word of serious condemnation in the Leete vocabulary.

As an instance of this impartiality in judgment, let us take the case of the Wykoffs. The Wykoffs were the owners of the whole block in which Mr. Leete's factory stood, and for thirty years old John Wykoff had been a model landlord. That is, he had treated Mr. Leete like a gentleman, and Mr. Leete had treated him like a gentleman, and every-

thing was perfectly satisfactory. But now John Wykoff was dead, and his son reigned in his place, and it appeared that this young whippersnapper of a Randolph Wykoff, through his lawyers, had ordered that Mr. Leete's lease should not be renewed when his five years came to an end in the spring. The lease was not to be renewed that had been renewed once every five years since 1862. The rent had always been paid promptly—John Wykoff had never had to wait a day or an hour, nor had he ever been called upon to pay a cent for repairs. And here was this young pup of a son turning out his best tenant, just for some crazy scheme of building a great co-operative factory to cover the whole block. John Wykoff was a perfect gentleman, but his son was no gentleman at all, that was one thing sure and settled.

"But I'll give him a piece of my mind," said Mr. Leete, at dinner. "I'll give him a piece of my mind when he comes back from gallivanting about Europe. Gimme some more cabbage, Ma Leete; I ain't lost my appetite, if the Wykoffs *have* gone back on me."

. . . . . .

Celia Leete, whose brief experience of a strange social world had led her to doubt the accuracy and the usefulness of the Leete foot-rule, sat alone, on this particular afternoon, in the chamber which she shared with Dorinda. She was trying to read a novel of local manufacture, which, according to a press-notice quoted from the Peoria *Palladium*,

gave "a vivid glimpse into the highest stratum of New York's most exclusive society." It told about a young country-girl, of overpowering refinement and general moral and mental correctness, who had come to New York to pay a visit to some worldly and aristocratic relations, several of whom she lured into righteousness during her stay. This young lady was finally saved from the wiles of a titled foreign adventurer by the interposition of the hero, a dark and superficially cynical person who had sounded all the depths and heights of swellness, and who, finding all things else hollow and objectionable, married her and took her off to do missionary work in the far West, where he felt that he could readily win the confidence and friendship of the miners and the Red Indians, and let the light of apostolic Episcopalianism into their darkened lives.

Celia Leete was not successful in her attempt to read this tender tale. She had got it out of the Mercantile Library on the strength of the advertisement which quoted the Peoria *Palladium's* notice. Almost all the characters had names that began with "Van" or "Vander," and the dinner-table talk and ball-room chat were of an elegance that would have been intolerable in any but the very highest stratum of society. Yet Celia was not pleased with it. She longed for a higher social life; but this was too much for her. Her desire had in it a more modest working. She even wondered whether it was true or not—she wondered if the man who had written that book knew anything

more about the life he described than she did herself. It was a puzzling thing. She wanted to be "nice;" but what was it, in fact, to be "nice"? Was it to talk in that long-winded way, and make reference to all sorts of things which could only be learned out of books? If it was, it must be desperately stupid. She wished that she had some clear idea of what really constituted that better life which she knew existed—somewhere, somehow. She wished that some sudden miracle would open a higher circle of society (she believed in "circles;" nay, in iron-bound rings of society) to the Leete family, and that all of them might be given a supernatural grace to fit them for their new surroundings.

Yes, she was looking for the Fairy Prince; that was it. She did not know it, but she was looking for him. If she could have seen deep enough into the depths of her unformulated fancy, she would have seen that the miracle she awaited was a man.

She let her eyes wander idly about the room, as she dropped the book on her lap. They rested first on Dorinda's bureau, splendent with chromo cards of variegated gorgeousness; and she sighed. Then they fell on her own severely simple chest of drawers—those her mother had owned in her girlhood. Then they turned to the window, and she looked out, and sighed again, and saw the Fairy Prince.

For the Fairy Prince still comes among us, in spite of what the photographers of fiction say;

and every now and then he marries the beggar maid, and takes her home to live with his people, and is mightily sorry for it afterward, although, as his antique prototype most likely did, he makes shift to live happily with her ever after—before the eyes of the world.

The Fairy Prince was instantly recognizable to Celia's eyes, although I am afraid other people would have seen in him no more than a good-looking, robust young man, with shoulders so broad that they drew attention from his six feet of stature—a young man with a well-bred carriage, a healthy, dark skin, fine eyes under soft, heavy, black eyebrows, good teeth, and the promise of a moustache—a young man with an expression of dignified earnestness upon his face which suggested the idea that he took things in this world somewhat seriously, and regarded his own progress through it as an event not to be lightly considered. In short, other people would have seen just such a young man as Harvard College turns out by the dozen, into a gibing, vulgar world, too much given to levity.

But Celia saw in this stranger, as he stood at her father's gate, a vast deal more than this. Perhaps she could not have told us anything further about him than that he was "different." Different, she meant, from the men she knew in her daily life, with a difference that was not only in looks and in bearing, but that even went, to her perception, to his very garments, or at least to his way

of wearing a very plain every-day suit of tweed.

He felt about the gate for a bell-handle, and, not finding it, pushed in and walked up the path, casting an inquiring glance upward as he went, and catching a glimpse of Celia at her upper window. In another moment his ring clanged through the empty house. Mrs. Leete was making purchases for the household against Sunday. Dorinda was buying unnecessary personal adornments at twenty-seven cents and thirty-nine cents apiece, as was her wont of a Saturday afternoon. Mr. Leete and Alonzo were still at the factory, for it was pay-day, and they stayed later than the hands. And Susan, the "help," was enjoying herself at the eleventh annual picnic of the Daughters of Temperance and Grand Rebekah Protective Lodge. It was clear that Celia had to go downstairs and answer the bell. Why should it make her heart flutter and throb with wild and irrational disturbance just to open the door to a stranger of amiable and pacific appearance?

She hurried down the stairs, after a hasty glance at the mirror and the administration of a deft pat or two to what she called, I am sorry to say, her drapery. She wondered how she would look to such alien eyes. She wished that she were in her white flannel, her dearest dress; but there was no time for vain wishing, and she opened the door.

He had not vanished: he was there, raising his hat and asking if this were Mr. Leete's house.

The quiet deference of his manner, his low, clear voice, his somewhat unfamiliar accent, all caught her pleased attention and fitted with his outward seeming into one harmonious whole that to Celia appeared nothing short of absolute masculine perfection. It was like a dream coming true; it was as though a more than human messenger had arrived, to summon her to that world which she pictured only in her thoughts. She wondered if her voice was trembling, or if her face was white. Meanwhile the young gentleman looked up at what he believed was the prettiest girl he had ever seen, and heard her say, softly and sweetly:

"Yes, this is Mr. Leete's house; but my father is not in. Do you want to see him?"

Perhaps Celia put forward her relationship to Mr. Leete thus promptly, because of some faint fear that the Fairy Prince might take her for the housemaid, though nothing in his courtly manner suggested the idea.

"I *do* wish to see Mr. Leete," he said, and Celia thought again that his voice was quite in keeping with his other perfections. "My name is Wykoff —Randolph Wykoff—and I am anxious to speak to Mr. Leete on a matter of business. I am afraid he has been greatly annoyed by an error—an inadvertence of my agents."

"Won't you come in?" asked Celia. Randolph Wykoff! There was no doubt about this young monarch's pedigree or his possessions.

"I'm afraid I haven't time," Mr. Wykoff said,

as he stepped into the entry and told his tale with a flattering deference in his manner.

"Of course I didn't mean, when I made up my mind to build on that unfortunate block—I didn't mean to give annoyance to any of the tenants—certainly not to Mr. Leete. I have always heard my father speak of Mr. Leete in the highest terms—he has often said that he would rather lose all the rest of his tenants than Mr. Leete."

It may be doubted whether John Wykoff had ever said anything quite so enthusiastic; but his son was young and impulsive, and Mr. Leete's daughter was very pretty.

"I should like very much to leave a message for Mr. Leete, if it wouldn't trouble you too much. No? Well, then, you see——"

Randolph Wykoff was in Yokohama when the news of his father's death reached him. He started for home at once, by way of Europe, for he had some business in Belgium. He was a very young man, and as soon as he began to think of anything outside of his immediate grief, he found his whole mind occupied with the consideration of his vast responsibility as the custodian of a mighty fortune. He felt that it was his duty to do something for the world. He could not tell exactly what he ought to do; but he felt that the world expected something of him, and he set to work at once, hunting for a rich man's mission. Now, he had heard of a certain model *usine* near Brussels, and he stopped on his homeward way to inspect it. It was in truth an ingeniously planned

structure. By a clever economy in the design and in the application of steam-power, it gave cheap and suitable lodgment to a large number of workers in various handicrafts, forming a congeries of factories and workshops within a wonderfully small space. It was, in its way, a nineteenth-century marvel of saving in space and power. Wykoff decided at once that a similar building should take the place of the motley group of wasteful old buildings on his Houston Street block; and he instantly telegraphed his determination to his lawyers in New York, and instructed them not to renew leases. But his brief instructions did not make clear the fact that he meant only to give his tenants a little temporary trouble for their own permanent good; and when he reached New York, he had to face a storm of protests from angry leaseholders. These people he was now striving to placate, and to win over to his new plans. As the plans were really good—as he had stumbled on a wise enterprise in all honest ignorance—and as he went about his work with much youthful enthusiasm, he had less trouble than might have been looked for.

Much of all this did Mr. Randolph Wykoff communicate to Miss Celia Leete. But even after an exposition so long that he had hardly time, when he left the house, to catch the train for his mother's summer home at East Hampton—even after so long a parley, he thought it necessary to see Mr. Leete again, and in Mr. Leete's house.

"Of course," he said, "I could see him at his

office; but I must show him my plans, and my architect's place is very near here in Broadway, and unless——"

He paused.

"I'm sure father would be very glad to see you here, Mr. Wykoff," said Celia. What could she say else?

So it was arranged that Mr. Wykoff should call on Monday, just after dinner; and Mr. Wykoff took the glory of his presence out of the dark old entry, and Celia stood in the doorway just long enough to see the Fairy Prince turn at the gate and lift his hat to her. Then she went in and shut the door—and hid her face in her hands.

. . . . . .

It was a grand story that Celia had to tell a little later, while her mother and Dorinda were setting the table, and Popper Leete sat in his shirt-sleeves, with his stocking-feet on the window-sill, and divided his attention between the evening paper and his chattering family. The visit of a stranger was always an event of some importance in that quiet household; surely a visitor with such a mission was a rare bird, and one to be well talked over. And then, I regret to say, there was something in the fact that the visitor was a Wykoff, something in the fact that the Wykoffs were "swells." Not that a Wykoff was better than any other man; not that a swell did not deserve the contempt of plain people with no nonsense about them—and yet I believe that every member of that

family was secretly conscious of receiving an increment of social value from the fact that a Wykoff had stood within their doors. Somehow it emphasized the fact of their common humanity. They all felt freshly reassured of the great truth—which they had always known—that they might be swells themselves, if they would but stoop to it.

"I told you, Popper Leete," said his wife, as she trotted about the room; "I told you folks like the Wykoffs ain't likely to play such mean tricks as that. It ain't their way. I declare, Celia, how many napkins *have* you had this week. Now, I see your ring when you put it away yesterday, an' it was jest as clean as it could be, that napkin. If you're so mighty finicky, you'd better wash 'em yourself."

Mr. Leete took Wykoff's explanation as an admission of defeat. There are some people who cannot bear to own that they have been angry for naught.

"I thought he'd come to his senses," Popper Leete condescended to say; "he's a young feller, an' he's got suthin' to learn in this world, he'll find in good time. I give those lawyers a piece of my mind that time, an' I guess he heard of it. Yes, I'm glad he's come to his senses."

"What'd he look like, Cele?" Dorinda pestered her; "was he reel good-lookin'? Did he have dimun' studs in his shirt? They say it's awfle toney in England to have dimun' studs."

Alonzo was the only one who took no interest in

the evening's topic of conversation. His air of chill indifference showed that if young Mr. Wykoff were twenty young Mr. Wykoffs, he would have to prove his claims to notice before Alonzo Leete would waste a single question upon him.

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Mr. Wykoff appeared promptly at one o'clock on the Monday. He had a long talk with Mr. Leete in the dining-room, and spread his plans out on the broad table. When Mr. Leete saw that for the same rent he was then paying he could have a larger factory, and that the process of construction could be so arranged as to obviate all necessity for a double removal of his goods and chattels, he expressed a qualified approval of Mr. Wykoff's proposition. When he pointed out a few changes in the plans which he thought would better fit them for American conditions, and the suggestions were gratefully accepted, he in some manner fathered the whole scheme.

After the business-talk Mr. Wykoff went into the parlor, where the ladies of the family had assembled, and lingered for a little chat. He found a theme in his recent travels, and he got on nobly when his auditors discovered that, while he had no objectionable personal acquaintance with the royal family of England, yet he had seen the Queen and the Prince of Wales and smaller lights of the reigning house, and could tell many entertaining things of their appearance in public, their manners, and their ways. With a tact which comes

to a young man only under certain circumstances, he suppressed the fact that he had been presented at court, and said nothing of driving in coroneted carriages and dining at the tables of the great. The chat stretched out; it was past three when Celia tied up his plans for him, and he took his leave.

Dorinda thought him a reel elegant gentlem'n, and Mrs. Leete said: "Why, *I* think he's a nice, pleasant-spoken, well-behaved young feller. I ain't seen a young man I liked so well in some time."

It is a simple tale. Mr. Wykoff found occasion to come again with his plans, that he might avail himself of Mr. Leete's superior knowledge of the exigencies of practical business. Then he found still other occasions. When the actual work of building began, and he had to superintend it, he fell into a way of walking home with Mr. Leete, and dropping in for a friendly call—sometimes to share a meal. He was received with a shy welcome of subtle significance from Celia, and with a flattered and fluttering cordiality on the part of the rest of the family. Even Alonzo was willing to say, in casual conversation with his friends: "Wykoff—that's Randolph Wykoff, old John Wykoff's son—was in at our house last night, and he said——"

But at last they all understood why he sought their society, and that was the drop of acid in the cloudy solution. There were five different individual reactions in the family of Leete. To Celia

came the consciousness of a great and closely impending possibility. Her father was disturbed in mind, suspicious, and anxious. He had sufficient knowledge of the world to grasp the fact that men held, in such matters, widely differing codes of morality. He had no idea what Mr. Wykoff's code might be. The young man seemed a well-meaning youth—but what were his intentions? Dorinda had similar doubts, and the thought of losing her only sister, coupled, perhaps, with a trifle of natural jealousy, moved her to an enmity toward the intruder which she could hardly repress. As to Alonzo, he was wounded past all soothing—wounded in the inmost tenderness of a hidden pride. For Alonzo's heart worshipped what his lips contemned. In his secret soul he adored swelldom. And now the aristocracy had held out its shapely hand to him, and for a brief space he had hugged the delusion that he was accepted on his own merits, and that the disadvantages of his parentage and his surroundings—which he recognized, and yet loyally accepted—did not count against him personally. And now he found that he was only the brother of a pretty girl. His spirit was filled with a bitterness that nourished itself in silence, and the dreadful things that he expected to come of the unhallowed courtship are beyond all mentioning here. Good Mrs. Leete alone stood Wykoff's friend in his wooing, and her simple, honest breast heaved with motherly pride and fond, foolish hopes and aspirations.

And meanwhile Randolph Wykoff kept on call-

ing, and seemed totally unconscious of any loss of spontaneity or heartiness in his welcome at the house of the Leetes; and late in September he and Celia told each other that love at first sight was a living truth. After which, Randolph went home to tell his mother.

PART II

RANDOLPH'S communication was not a surprise to his mother. In such matters the maternal instinct needs but a small clew for its wonderful intuitive processes. It is not often that a young man surprises his mother in this sort of avowal. There are cases, but they are rare. I knew one dear old lady whose son took her aside one day. "I'm engaged," he said. "I know it, dear," the sweet old gentlewoman replied, "and I wish you would tell Sally Hastings that I shall love her as though she were my own daughter." "But it isn't Sally Hastings, mother," said the young man, who had never been a steadfast young man; "it's Miss McIlvaine, from Tonawanda."

Mrs. Wykoff had known for some months that her son was a constant visitor at the Leetes'. She knew that there were two girls in the family, and that the younger was a pretty girl, and superior to the rest of the Leetes in taste and education. She knew, also, that however valuable Mr. Leete's aid and advice might be to her son, the young man's enthusiasm for his new work was not great enough to make him forget a social code acquired by inheritance, inculcated in early youth, and ratified by the authority of Harvard College. There

was but one interpretation to be put upon his devotion to these new friends.

All this Mrs. Wykoff knew from the little her son had told her. It was little enough. Randolph was not secretive or deceitful, but he rarely talked personalities, and of his own doings he spoke no oftener than was necessary. He had a young man's sensitiveness to the criticism and comment that fall to the lot of the open-mouthed enthusiast. And then his position was not so clear to himself that he could make it clear to others. Do not blame him. If you were falling deeper and deeper into love, and knew that the object of your affection could not be acceptable to your kind parents, would you issue daily bulletins of the progress of your case, with conscientious diagnosis and prognosis? Was there ever a pair of lovers who did not yearn to keep their common joy eternally a selfish secret? Frown all you care to, stern censor; if all the lovers had their way, there would not be desert islands enough to go around.

Mrs. Wykoff knew something and guessed a great deal, yet she could not act either on the certainty or the suspicion. She knew that she could not oppose Randolph. He had all his father's self-confidence and stubborn courage without—the widow sadly thought—without, as yet, John Wykoff's clear judgment, fine sense of right and wrong, and unselfish devotion to principle.

John Wykoff's wife knew well the Wykoff strain. She married John Wykoff when his father, by ill-judged speculations, had ruined not himself

only but all the Wykoff family, root and branch, and had made himself hated by the whole body of his kith and kin. She had been her husband's best friend and counsellor through all the years it took to build up again the great shipping house of Wykoff & Son, and during those years she had led a pinched, narrow, meagre life. Then, when the new fortune was made, and the honor and credit of the old firm reëstablished, it was her tact that won them admission to the society from which Grandfather Wykoff's recklessness and their own poverty had exiled them. It was her task to renew old associations, to strengthen long-enfeebled ties, to close up breaches, and negotiate reconciliations. She had to bear snubs and slights; she had to win her right to respect and esteem in a long and hard fight; and all that she had to do and bear was done and borne, not for her own sake, but for the sake of her husband and her boy. For herself she had no need to take thought; she was a Broadwood, of Philadelphia, and her family thought that she lowered herself when she married the son of a bankrupt Wykoff.

The struggle had ended years ago, and now Mrs. Wykoff was a widow, still handsome, rich in money and in friends. The discipline of her life had not been lost on her. Her nature, that was always sweet, had grown strong in troublous times, and she was, at forty-five, a chastened woman of the world. I think the world makes as many saints as sinners.

She received her son's story with a calm accept-

ance of the situation that ought to have put him on his guard. To be sure, she cried a little, but only for a moment; and for the rest she was all loving interest and attention. It must be said for Randolph that, having come to confession, he made a good, honest, clean breast of it. He made no attempt to put an imaginative gilding on the Leetes. In speaking of the family he dwelt only on their unimpeachable probity and respectability. Of Celia he could truthfully say that her manners and her speech were correct. If he dwelt too much on her intelligence, on her cleverness, and on her understanding of and sympathy with his hopes and ambitions, it must be kept in mind that Celia was an uncommonly good listener.

"I am thinking of your happiness, my dear," his mother said; "I trust I am not selfish. I could have wished, of course, that it had been some one who—some one whom I knew and loved—but——"

There lurked in this broken sentence an allusion that Randolph understood—an allusion to a cherished hope of his mother's. Perhaps he felt in some way guilty, for he made no direct reply, saying only:

"You will know Celia, mother, and you will love her. You cannot help it."

"I hope so," said the poor woman, with the best smile that she had for the occasion. "When shall I see her? Would it not be well for me to call on her mother?"

Randolph Wykoff went away from this interview with an easy mind and a heart filled with

loving admiration for his mother. She was a wonderful woman, he thought, thus to combine feminine gentleness with masculine common sense. How kindly and how wisely she had taken it! It did not come into his mind that in the course of that brief conversation he had been led to propose and to pledge himself to two things which he had never thought of before—first, that there should be no announcement of his engagement to Celia—no actual engagement, in fact—for a year to come; second, that the engagement should be of not less than a year's duration from the date of the announcement. These two ideas seemed to have been of his own conception. He knew, or he thought he knew, how much personal annoyance his marriage to Celia Leete would bring him. He had no desire to add to this annoyance, or be guilty of a precipitancy which he himself could not excuse. His world would be ill-spoken enough; it was not for him to justify unkind criticism. It came to him as the most natural thing imaginable that Celia Leete ought to be introduced to some of his friends, at least, as Celia Leete, before they knew her as his betrothed. And he could hardly get his present business off his hands and feel free to devote himself to a wife short of a year or two of hard work.

Three days later Mrs. Wykoff was sitting in the darkened front parlor of the Leete house on the hair-cloth sofa under the chromo of the "Old Oaken Bucket." On the opposite wall hung the ambrotype of Mrs. Leete's mother, taken at the

age of eighty-seven. Mrs. Leete's mother showed a mouth that seemed to be simply a straight line where the lips turned in. What little hair she had hung in a large flat festoon on either side of her head. A broad lace collar covered her shoulders. It was fastened under the chin by a brooch of vast size, which was, in fact, a box with a glass front, designed, apparently, to contain specimens of the hair of deceased members of the wearer's family, after the depressing fashion of the days of ambrotypes and inchoate civilization. On the face of Mrs. Leete's mother was an expression of stern resolve. She was sitting for her picture, and she was sitting hard.

Mrs. Wykoff was gazing hopelessly at this monument of respectability when Mrs. Leete entered the room, red in the face from a hasty change of dress, and agitated by a nervousness the existence of which she would not have admitted to herself.

Why does your thoroughbred collie bark at the tramp or the peddler within your gates, and greet the shabbiest gentlehood with a friendly wag of the tail? It is because there is a difference in human beings, just as there is in dogs, and the dogs know it. The human beings know it, too, although there are some who belie their knowledge —who, having learned that the rank is but the guinea's stamp and that the man 's the gowd for a' that, go about trying to make themselves and others believe that there is no such thing as an

alloy in the world, no counterfeit coin, no base metal.

Mrs. Leete was agitated even to her inmost spiritual recesses when she saw this handsome and well-dressed woman rise and come forward to meet her, with such an easy grace and dignity—with such a soft rustling of her black raiment. It was five minutes at least before the perfect tact that went with these outward and visible things had put the hostess at her ease.

After a little, Celia came shyly into the room, with cold hands and a pale face. Mrs. Wykoff's heart leaped in pleased surprise when she saw the girl of her son's choice. She kissed Celia almost with tenderness, and she felt a genuine thankfulness for the child's delicate beauty and her modest bearing. "I can understand it now," she thought, "and it is better than I had dared to hope."

But presently in came Mr. Leete, in his Sunday broadcloth, with a new collar making him very uncomfortable about the chin, and with him came Dorinda, red as to her bodice and black as to her skirts and wonderful as to the dressing of her hair, and all was not so well with Mrs. Wykoff.

Mrs. Wykoff's visit lasted scarcely an hour, yet, when she had gone, every member of the family except Celia felt that affairs wore a new and less pleasing aspect. There was no longer a delightful certainty about the prospective alliance of the Leetes to one of the oldest and wealthiest families

in the country. Three days before, Randolph Wykoff had asked Mr. Leete for his daughter's hand, and the offer had been accepted with no longer hesitation than was absolutely demanded by the self-respect of the head of the house. Since then, all the family had lived in a rose-tinted dream. Now, Mrs. Wykoff's friendly, informal chat had somehow served to marshal before their eyes an array of hard, cold, unwelcome facts. How had it been done? They did not know. They could not blame Mrs. Wykoff; she had been amiability itself. Yet there were the facts, patent to all of them. Why, it was Mr. Leete himself who had advanced the idea that for two young people to talk of marriage after three months of acquaintance was simply absurd. It was he who had said that people—he did not perhaps know what people, but, in fact, *people*—would comment with justifiable severity upon such heedless haste. Certainly the suggestion that at least a year must elapse before the announcement of the engagement had come from him; and none of the house of Leete was sufficiently versed in the subtleties of polite diplomacy to inquire how the notion came *to* Mr. Leete.

It was at Popper Leete, in very truth, that Mrs. Wykoff had directed her masked batteries, and with more effect than she suspected. She had touched lightly on Randolph's youth, his inexperience, his impulsive nature, and she had called attention to the undeniable truth that young men do not always know their own minds. Mr. Leete

had taken the hint, and to his mind it had an exaggerated significance.

"I d'no but what she's right," he said to his wife; "mebbe we've been too easy about sayin' 'yes.' She's a business-woman, and she's got a good, sound head. Folks useter say that John Wykoff and his wife was as good a business firm as there was in town. Now, she knows this young feller, an' what do we know about him? Nothin', when you come right down *to* it. We don't know what his ideas are, or what sort of a man he is, anyway. We don't know how he spends his evenin's, or what he does with himself when we don't see him. Now, s'pose he was on'y foolin' with Celia, and was to get tired of her an' skip out to Europe, some day eruther? We can't tell. S'pose he was to marry her and then turn out bad? Look at the way them Newport folks are all the time gittin' divorced an' bein' shown up in the noozpapers. How do we know but what he's bean a-makin' up to a dozen girls over there in Europe. Now, reely, we don't know much more about that young man than if he was a Eu*r*opean himself."

"Oh, Popper Leete," remonstrated his wife, "'tain't so bad as *that!*"

"Well," Mr. Leete insisted, shaking his head in stubborn doubt, "'tain't much better, when you come right down *to* it."

. . . . . .

There are plenty of married couples in the world who can lay their hands on their twain hearts and

unanimously declare that the time of their betrothal was the happiest time of their lives. There are other people, however, who can as honestly say that they were never more uncomfortable and generally miserable than they were in the No Man's Land through which civilized matrimony must be approached.

Perhaps the months or years of engagement may be enjoyable to those who enter upon their contract in a business-like and practical spirit, or to those easy-going mortals who take their love on trial, much as they might take a typewriter or a patent lamp. But to two young people dreadfully in love and dreadfully in earnest, this stretch of life is like the trying pause when the soldier on the battle-field waits for the order to advance.

The woman's position is certainly doubtful and disagreeable. She belongs neither to her parents nor to her betrothed—not even to herself. Hers is the proud prerogative of deciding between blue and pink for the dining-room paper, between script and old English for the engraving on the spoons—while, perhaps, her former owners and her future owner are settling on a religion for her and her children *in posse*.

We do not all of us have to suffer the possible rigors of this state of interregnum. The kindly refinements of modern life make the situation as agreeable as may be. Yet, among the gentlest and most delicate of people, it is often a situation at best but barely tolerable. What must it be among people who are not given to yielding to others, and

who are given to speaking their minds—those hastily made-up minds which, for the most part, were best left unspoken?

It was a cocksure and outspoken family into which Randolph Wykoff had tumbled; and one that had well-defined opinions on all matters of personal conduct, and wanted no new lights from any source. And as Randolph himself could be cocksure on occasion, and as he certainly had not come down to Chelsea Village to seek illumination on any dark points of social doctrine, a clash was inevitable, and the clash came promptly.

It came when the chilling truth was first clearly recognized by the Leetes that young Mr. Wykoff was engaged to Celia exclusively, and did not hold himself bound to the rest of the family by any ties so tender. To be sure, Wykoff was the soul of kindly courtesy in his relations with them all, and yet, like the old farmer in *Punch,* sipping airy champagne in place of his accustomed old ale, they "didn't seem to get no forr'ader." When Randolph broke one of Mrs. Leete's teacups, he made the accident an excuse for sending her a full tea set so delicate of mould that Mrs. Leete never dared to use it. He gave Father Leete a meerschaum that he had brought from Europe. He adorned Alonzo's scarf with a scarabæus of rare beauty. (Alonzo held the gift but lightly until it occurred to him to have its money value appraised at a Broadway jeweler's.) He loaded Celia with gifts, and he did not forget to select for her sister, every now and then, a trinket of a fashion more

noticeable than he would have held fitting for his betrothed. And as for flowers—he made the dingy house brilliant with the artificial refinements of the hot-house. But beyond courteous speech and an open hand, they soon found that nothing was to be expected of the new comer in the family circle.

Alonzo had to accept the obvious fact that he would never be put up at Mr. Randolph Wykoff's club, even if he sought such an honor—which he told his own conscience he did not. Dorinda saw bright visions fade before her eyes when she learned that Mr. Wykoff, whether he were in mourning or out of mourning, was not in the habit of taking his "lady friends" to the public balls, and that he did not so much as know the "Triton" from the "Männerchor." And Mrs. Leete, while she understood that John Wykoff's widow must live for many months, at least, in strict retirement from the world, yet felt that it had in some subtle way been made clear to her own perceptions that the hand of Society would never be stretched out to the Leetes at the particular request of the Wykoffs.

There was no question about it, Mr. Wykoff had no proper sense of his position as a prospective son- and brother-in-law; and hint and suggestion fell upon his calm unconsciousness of his delinquency as little sparks upon the breast of an ice bound lake. They did their best to bring him to a knowledge of what they called among themselves "the proper thing;" but neither precept nor

example availed against his vast innocent ignorance.

In this he was quite honest, although the Leete family could hardly believe it. It did occur to him, at one time, that he had been made to hear a great deal about a certain Mr. Cargill, soon to be wedded to one of Dorinda's bosom friends. This gentleman had acquired what seemed to Randolph a strange habit of taking his bride-to-be and all her family, including a maiden aunt, to the theatre some four or five times a week. For this ceremony, or operation, Mr. Cargill was wont to array himself, according to Dorinda's account, in a swallow-tail coat, a lavender satin tie, and an embroidered shirt. But beyond a vague wonder if perchance Cargill completed this costume with shepherd's plaid trousers and Roman sandals, Mr. Wykoff saw no hidden significance in the parable.

Thus it came to pass that Randolph, for his contumacious and persistent abiding in darkness, was put under a ban by all save one member of the family. Father and Mother Leete, it is true, visited their displeasure upon him only passively, and far, far more in sorrow than in anger. But Alonzo and Dorinda declared him anathema, and would have none of him. I need hardly say that their parents knew nothing of this unwise severity.

There was a time when Wykoff was welcomed at the portal by Celia's brother or her sister, as it might happen. (It was a convention in the family

—one of the "whats" which are "what"—that Celia might not with propriety open the front door to her beloved.) He was allowed to meet her in the hall-way, and they went into the parlor to chat out their private chat. Then they joined the family circle in the dining-room, where the evening lamp shone cheerily on the red cloth that turned the dining-table into a centre-table, and Randolph answered questions about his mother's health, or talked of building matters with Mr. Leete, or made engaging conversation on topics judiciously selected from the news of the day.

But that time was long past ere the winter had travelled over the brow of Christmas Hill. Now it was always Dorinda who opened the door to him. He did not know it, but Dorinda, on the nights when he might be looked for, took her seat by the dining-room door, on the most uncomfortable chair in the room, and awaited his coming in a gloomy spirit of duty. She always opened the door with the chain up, and peered through the crack as though she were expecting a stranger of murderous intentions. Then she said, with the corners of her mouth drawn down in a painful smile: "Oh, I *beg* your pardon, Mr. Wykoff; I didn't know it was you, to-night." The door was closed, the chain let down, the door swung open slowly, and Randolph was admitted, to face a greeting that rarely varied much in form:

"I don't *s'pose* you want to see the *fam'ly,* Mr. Wykoff; if you'll be so *kind* as to step into the *parlor,* I'll tell my *sister* you're here."

Dorinda had reduced the difficult arts of irony and sarcasm to a few simple formulas of vigorous emphasis, applied to the direct deliverances of ordinary conversation. Yet, had it not been for a certain ring of triumphant satisfaction in her tone, and a sparkle of proud achievement in her eye, Wykoff would perhaps have failed to suspect her intent.

In the front parlor, dimly lit and chilly—Alonzo was in charge of the furnace—Randolph awaited his betrothed. After what was held a proper and dignified space of time, she was permitted to join him. She came in, often, with a flush high on her cheeks and with a fluttering breath, and hid her head on his shoulder, where he let it lie. He was not an observant young man, he was not a demonstrative wooer, but he felt that his little girl was suffering persecution, and he pitied her.

He had more than Dorinda's depressing salutation to open his eyes. As he sat in the shadowy parlor, waiting for Celia, he heard Dorinda return to the dining-room to announce his coming. Her entrance was followed by a silence. Then came a loud grunt, from far down in Mr. Leete's deep lungs, as if he said, "Oh, it *that* all?" Sometimes a profound sigh was audible through the closed folding doors, and he could guess that there was a weight on Mother Leete's mind. And regularly, every night that he sat there, he heard Alonzo arise, march through the hall, put on his coat and hat, and go out into the night. And in doing this simple thing, Alonzo contrived, in every step along

the hall, to put a staccato accentuation into the setting down of his heel which could not fail to carry its meaning to the lost soul in the front parlor. It was the righteous man stalking out of the neighborhood of the accursed thing.

But of Celia's sufferings at her relatives' hands Randolph had an exaggerated conception. Alonzo and Dorinda annoyed her in their different ways, but she was quite able to take care of herself in every sort of family spat. She was gentle of spirit, gentle in her tastes; but she had learned to spar in many wordy contests, and she was now no longer dependent upon the love or the approval of either Alonzo or her sister. Indeed, all minor matters, all the little things of the house which had been important to her a few months before, meant nothing to her now. She was leading a life of which her brother, her sister, her father, her mother, knew nothing; she was walking in paths where their petty jealousies, spites, disappointments, and misunderstandings could not follow her.

There is, however, no telling where combatants like Alonzo and Dorinda will stop when they once start on a line of aggressive conduct. It is not enough for them to see that their weapons strike home; to see the punctures, to know, whatever momentary exaltation of soul may stay the physical pain of the victim, that, sooner or later, the wounds must begin to bleed, and the tender flesh to burn with fever. Theirs is a grosser warfare. They must see the suffering, they must hear the

cries; they must realize that they have inflicted material damage before they can feel that they have done what they set out to do. Especially must their vengeance be complete when it constitutes what they consider merited punishment—and to judge and to punish is the especial mission of these right-thinking and right-doing people, who, being ever in the right, have but small pity for those erring mortals who have not their light.

So it was not long before Dorinda laid down the foil of polite irony, and took to broadsword-practice. She had been content with the pleasure to be derived from outspoken conjectures as to her sister's probable behavior after she should have joined her "swell friends"—whether or no she would recognize her kinsfolk when she met them on the street—or look at any one who lived in a frame house—or use baking-powder in her kitchen. But now she relieved her mind with open and vituperative onslaughts upon Randolph Wykoff, his mother, and all that they stood for and represented in the social scheme. She gave up going to the door to let Randolph in, and that duty was delegated to Alonzo, who performed it in absolute silence, with a discourteous hostility in his bearing that, had he not been Celia Leete's brother, would have got him a sound thrashing at the hands of a young gentleman who had been held, in his time, one of the prettiest middle-weight boxers that had ever sparred at Harvard College.

It was a most unpleasant state of things for the engaged pair, and they talked it over at every

meeting. Wykoff was for going to Mr. Leete and demanding an abatement of the nuisance; but Celia, who underestimated the strength of her position, told him that parental interference would only embitter her persecutors, and make her lot the harder; and her lover unwillingly held his peace. It was Dorinda who brought matters to a climax.

Mrs. Wykoff had been ill. Her lungs were not over-strong, and she had been taken with something that looked like pneumonia. Randolph stopped at the Leetes, late one January afternoon, to tell Celia of his mother's progress toward recovery. He was admitted by the servant—a rare event; for attendance upon the front door was not among that handmaid's many duties. She let him into the parlor, and there he found Dorinda, volubly entertaining a young man and a young woman whom he at once guessed to be the much-vaunted Cargill and his bride-elect. Cargill was a tall young man with a large black moustache. His clothing had that effect of shiny and unwrinkled newness which is rarely to be observed save on the wire frames in the tailors' windows. Huge diamonds sparkled on his fingers, in his necktie, and even in a shamelessly exposed collar stud. Mrs. Cargill, that was to be, was clad in a blue velvet dress that just held its own for brilliancy against Dorinda's red bodice of state.

The Cargill and the Cargill-expectant glanced at the Wykoff as he entered and sat down in the farthest corner of the room. Dorinda did not

even turn her head, but pitched the conversation in a higher key, so that he might lose no word of it.

"Was you at the Sweatmans' sociable?" she inquired.

"Nope," said Mr. Cargill, sucking the big silver head of his cane.

"I heard it was real el'gant," Miss Leete ran on; "I couldn't go—ma 'n' me had to go to a meetin' of the church fair c'mittee. I s'pose you know I'm goin' to have the Rebekah booth at the fair. Hope you're comin' to patronize me. I'll sell you some lem'nade—'f you ever drink lem'nade, Mr. Cargill."

The simper with which this speech was ended was a beautiful tribute to Cargill in his quality of man of the world.

"Ain't sellin' beer this trip?" was Mr. Cargill's jocular inquiry. "Then I guess I'll take lem'nade. Sell a stick with it?"

"Oh, do hush," said the bride-elect, dabbing at him with her muff, and pretending to be scandalized at his wickedness. "*I* think lem'nade's reel nice, don't you, D'rinda? I'm comin' to get some, 'n' I'm goin' to make *him* pay for it, too."

Two treble laughs and a bass laugh did honor to this witticism, and, when the spasm of merriment was over, Dorinda began again.

"D'you see Mr. Cree at the Sweatmans'? *I* think he's one 'f the nicest gentlemen I ever *saw*."

Celia was out; it was a quarter of an hour before she came in, and through that quarter of an hour Randolph Wykoff sat in his corner of the parlor

and heard the chronicle of a society that in one way might well be called, as it would have called itself, "el'gant."

That was bad enough, but there was worse yet. The visitors took their leave at last, and Dorinda followed them into the hallway. She closed the door behind her, but one door was a poor obstruction to Dorinda's voice, and Wykoff heard what probably was intended that he should hear:

"*Him?* Oh, that's Mr. Wykoff—Celia's friend, you know—he ain't any 'f *mine.* I'd have introduced you, on'y I don't hardly know him well enough. We ain't fine enough for him, 'n' I thought maybe our friends wasn't. Guess you ain't lost much, though."

When Celia came in Randolph told her, as gently as possible, but definitely and definitively, that thereafter he would come to the house only when her sister was not at home, and he kept his word.

Yet they had to see each other, and so they fell into a bad way of meeting in the streets. Celia contrived to let her lover know that on such a day a shopping tour would bring her through such and such a street at this or that hour; and at the time and place appointed, Randolph would meet her to walk home with her. This unwise arrangement brought itself to a timely end, happily for both of them. Celia's sources of supply were among the marts of fashion that line West Fourteenth Street and the region round about. Thence she could find no route homeward on which a young man like

Randolph Wykoff could have the ghost of an excuse for loitering. He therefore suggested to her to make her purchases at the larger shops on Broadway, so that he might join her in the quiet side-streets to the east of the great thoroughfare. Those streets between Union and Madison Squares are, for the most part, given over to boarding-houses and lodging-houses of dull respectability, and although they are not much traversed, they lie in lines that any one might follow who would pass from Murray Hill to—say, for a fine old-fashioned quarter, Stuyvesant Square. And as the Wykoffs lived near Stuyvesant Square, Randolph might well take any one of them on his way home, without drawing undesired attention to the fact of his meeting a young lady, and turning on his track to walk a few blocks with her.

But the Broadway tradesmen have not the Fourteenth Street idea of "bargains;" and it soon became known in the Leete household, where nothing was done in privacy, that Celia was buying embroidery silk, and gros-grain ribbons, and cotton lace, and ruchings, and the like, at prices that were simply scandalous to the apprehensions of Fourteenth Street shoppers. Dorinda drew her own conclusions, which were quite correct; she communicated them to her mother; her mother brought the case before Mr. Leete, and he, summoning Celia to his presence, heard the whole story. Up to that point Celia had suffered in silence, obeying that unnumbered commandment which the experience of childhood has added to the

Decalogue: Thou Shalt Not Tell Tales. Now, there was nothing for it but to uncover the history of her ill-treatment and her lover's at the hands of Alonzo and Dorinda. Popper Leete heard; he constituted himself a dictatorial court of inquiry and judgment, and when the culprits had made their inadequate defence, he laid down the law.

"I want this nonsense stopped right here," he said, sternly; "when your ma 'n' me wanter break off that match we'll do it, an' when we want any help from either of you we'll let you know. What your ma an' me think of him is none of your business, you understand! When he comes here you want to treat him decent and civil. I'm ashamed of you, that a gentleman should come into my house, and be treated so by you two young whippersnappers that he can't come to see your sister like she was a lady. Don't let me hear of this nonsense no more; you hear me—NO more! An' quit a-naggin' of your sister!"

Mr. Leete's judgment, once put forth, allowed no disobedience, either in letter or in spirit, and as he took pains in his own person to show a proper and dignified courtesy toward Mr. Wykoff, it was not long before Celia and her betrothed were enjoying to the full such comfort as there may be in a forced peace. But it was not a pleasant air to breathe, and though the occasion of their parting was sad in itself, they both felt more relief than either would have cared to own when Randolph was summoned to Florida, where his mother lay ill. She had gone South to regain strength, after

her illness of January, only to catch cold again in six weeks. She was nursed by the two Curtis girls, the daughters of her favorite cousin, and she was well nursed; but her relapse proved a serious matter, and Randolph was sent for. He set out at once, and stayed with his mother until the worst was over, and while she regained her strength. It was in the last of May that he brought her home to the old Wykoff house near East Hampton. During this time he and Celia corresponded with regularity. It was a most satisfying correspondence, at the bottom, as our French friends say; but when Randolph tied up the little package of letters and tucked it away in the safest corner of the trunk that he was packing for the homeward journey, he thought that perhaps it would be a good thing to suggest to Celia that he would be greatly pleased if she cared to read one or two books that he had found serviceable in his own studies.

. . . . . .

One little incident that took place just before Mrs. Wykoff went to Florida made a deep impression upon Mr. Leete, and set him to thinking uneasily of the future. His wife drew his attention to the fact that, Mrs. Wykoff having passed through a serious illness, a call of congratulation from the head of the house of Leete would be an appropriate and delicate attention to the convalescent. Perhaps, the good wife suggested, the Leete family had been remiss in such matters of courtesy. Mrs. Wykoff's visit was still unre-

turned, and, as Mrs. Leete truly said, it was only because Popper Leete had kept saying that he would go with her some day, and had never yet found the day to suit him. *Now,* they didn't both of them want to go streakin' down there together, when Mrs. Wykoff was sick, or sort of sick; and she herself couldn't go, with the church fair to look after; but Popper Leete could just as well as not, and it would look as if they meant to do the right thing; and if he'd go now, he'd never have to go again, and he might just as well go, and have *done* with it.

Mr. Leete went. Dressed in his Sunday broadcloth, he presented himself at the door of the Wykoffs' great house on Second Avenue, and gave the liveried menial his one card, neatly written in Dorinda's elaborate "Anserian System" handwriting.

Mrs. Wykoff was lying on the lounge in her sunny sitting-room, which looked out on a little snow-covered corner of the garden, where a half-clad Venus snatched at her scanty raiment, and looked as though she would like to be able to shudder, and shake the snow off her bare shoulders.

Mr. Leete had a pleasant call. He soon found himself talking readily with the gentle, gracious lady on the lounge, and he was so much at his ease that he was even able to cast furtive glances at the room and its furniture—rich, yet simple and old enough in fashion to come within the scope of his knowledge. He was so much at ease, indeed, that when Mrs. Wykoff's tea was brought in he

accepted her offer of a cup, and becoming interested in the conversation, dropped the cup on the floor and broke it into many fragments.

He was deeply distressed. It took all Mrs. Wykoff's tact and discretion to make him feel that she saw no uncommon awkwardness in his mishap.

"They are absurd things, those little eggshell cups," she said; "they are forever breaking. Randolph brought me that set only three months ago, and I think that he and I between us have contrived to break half a dozen cups since then. Don't give it another thought, please."

Mr. Leete did give it another thought, however. He gave it thought enough to privily examine the mark on the bottom of the broken cup. It bore a French name, strange to him; but he succeeded in getting some sort of mental picture of the combined characters. In his own phrase, he sized it up roughly. When, a quarter of an hour later, he found himself in the street, with no clear idea of the means by which his visit had been brought to a painless close and an easy exit, he was already nursing the germ of a great idea.

Why should not a Leete, as well as a Wykoff, replace a broken set of chinaware? Mrs. Wykoff had said that six cups were already gone—Mr. Leete's cup made the seventh. Here was a chance to perform an act of substantial courtesy, and with credit to the family. "I guess I'll do a little suthin' in the crockery line myself," thought Mr. Leete.

He remembered that Randolph's gift of china

had come from a well-known shop on Broadway, and thither he went at once. A polite little salesman met him near the door of the long wareroom, and inquired his pleasure. Mr. Leete was conscious of feeling large, ponderous, and solid amid all the fragility. Faïence and Limoges were in front of him, Sèvres and Belleek to right and left, and his eyes rested on nothing simpler or more modest than that sturdy Meissen ware which is still honored under the name of Dresden.

"I want some tea-things," began Mr. Leete, "of the kind you call—" the French word failed him, but his eye lit on the thing itself, a set of the identical pattern, different only in color, lying in state among the satin folds of a huge leather case.

"There—them!" he said; "that's what I'm lookin' for, only I want it in blue."

"We haven't a blue set, sir," said the clerk; "we had one, but we sold it a few months ago."

"D'ye know who you sold it to?" queried Mr. Leete, hiding his detective intent under a mask of simplicity. "Maybe the party would be willin' to sell."

The clerk smiled superciliously.

"I hardly think so," he said; "our trade is pretty much with private customers."

"I'd like to have you make sure," persisted Mr. Leete; "I want blue, an' I'm willin' to pay for it."

The salesman trotted to the back of the shop, and spoke to a clerk at a desk. The clerk fluttered the leaves of a great book, and the salesman trotted back, with a superior smile on his lips.

"I don't think you'll be very successful, sir," he said; "that other set was bought by Mr. Wykoff, son of old John Wykoff, who died last year. You may have heard of him. They're one of the oldest families in the city, and one of the richest. I don't believe they'd be willing to dispose of anything they bought."

"I've heard of 'em," said Mr. Leete, smiling in his turn. He wanted to see that salesman's face when he told him to box up the pink set and send it to Mrs. John Wykoff, Second Avenue. After all, the pink would do as well as the blue.

"What's the price of this set here?" he asked, touching one of the egg-shell cups with a careful finger.

"Four hundred and twenty dollars," said the salesman.

"Eh?" said Mr. Leete.

"Very cheap at that, sir—marked down from four hundred and seventy-five. All hand-painted by one of the first artists in France. Only these two sets ever imported—quite unique."

"Hum!" snorted Mr. Leete, "too bad you ain't got the blue. Good-day."

Out in the street he made a rapid calculation.

"Four hundred 'n' twenty—cup 'n' saucer's one piece, I s'pose; one ain't good for much 'thout t'other—twelve—teapot, jug, an' sugar's fifteen—wa'n't no slopbowl—fifteen into four hundred 'n' twenty—twenty-eight dollars. Moses Taylor!"

This is the New Yorker's special oath of astonishment; though why that eminent and sober-

minded merchant has received such strange canonization in the calendar of mild profanity no one may know. When he was at home he told his wife all about it, and shook his head dubiously as he drew some uncomfortable conclusions.

"I don't see," he said, "that we've got any occasion to travel with folks that c'n smash twenty-eight dollars' wuth 'f crockery an' not so much as know it. That ain't any sort of housekeeping for Celia. She ain't been brought up in that way, an' I don't want her to get sech ideas. Twenty-eight dollars! Why, Ma Leete, I'd ruther have her eat off stone china all the days 'f her life—an' so would you."

. . . . . .

And yet Mr. Leete was as much pleased as was his wife when, in July, a letter came from Mrs. Wykoff, at East Hampton, inviting Celia to spend a few weeks at the Wykoff homestead.

"You will have a dull time," she wrote, "for I am still something of an invalid, and, of course, we see no one; but my nieces—I call them so—are spending the summer with me, and they and Randolph will do what they can to make it pleasant for you. Write me that you will come, and Parker, my faithful factotum, will call for you and make you comfortable on your journey."

Even Alonzo felt some tender stirrings toward mercy in the depths of his stern soul; and Dorinda gave it as her opinion that Celia could adequately display her self-respect and sense of independence

by delaying her answer for the space of twenty-four hours.

As it took poor Celia that time to prepare a missive sufficiently lofty in tone to pass the family conclave, Dorinda had her own way, and, being placated, entered with an interest only too active and energetic into the preparation of her sister's paraphernalia.

PART III

DORINDA threw herself upon the task of preparing Celia for the fray with a zeal and ardor that brought only dismay to her younger sister's breast. It having been decided that the victim of society must have some new gowns, Dorinda at once planned a wardrobe of variegated brilliancy. Celia strove with all her tact for a more modest working, but she had to stand up and do battle-royal for her own standards when Dorinda wanted her to purchase a certain "Dame Trot" garment, of a pattern which was at the time exciting the irreverent attention of the press. They came to an open rupture. Celia finally appealed to the head of the house, who decided, with masculine justice, that she was entitled to choose her clothes for herself. Dorinda writhed; but came back to the fascinating employment more in sorrow than in anger.

When the little trunk was at last packed, Dorinda's verdict on the contents was that they were good enough, but had no sort of style about them. Celia, doubtful of their possessing any merits at all, took a negative comfort from this. Ah! if she could only gather an idea of Mrs. Wykoff's likes from Dorinda's dislikes!

The day came when Mrs. Wykoff's maid was to convey her charge to the further shore of Long Island. This relegation of Celia to a menial's care had somewhat troubled the family conclave; but it had been decided that, in view of the differences in social ethics revealed by past dealings with the Wykoff family, it would be fair to assume that the lady's intent was respectful, however much her course was open to the criticism of the right minded. The sun was shining on the midday meal when the carriage was announced; Celia had finished a nervous attempt at a meal, and was ready for the ordeal. Five napkins fell to the ground, and amid a storm of caresses and tears Celia was hustled to the door. Even Alonzo shook her hand with a stern cordiality which hinted that, under favorable circumstances, all might yet be forgiven. Her father kissed her brow, and in a minute she was in the carriage—the Wykoff carriage—with Parker.

Parker was a Briton, and she stood by her colors. Long years before, when her firm but kindly rule over Mrs. Wykoff was just beginning, her employer made one single effort to treat her as an American.

"Your name is Jane, I believe?" she said: "I will call you Jane, I think, hereafter, instead of Parker."

Jane Parker dropped an old-world courtesy, and set her thin lips.

"Indeed, mum, I would not be that disrespectful to my betters; and I 'ope, mum, you will not

insist.'' Mrs. Wykoff did not insist, and Parker remained Parker.

The carriage rolled away, and Celia leaned back in her corner and felt a delicious glow of yearning fright and mysterious hope. Opposite her sat Parker, bolt upright, an eminently respectable guide to the gates of Elysium. Beyond her, through the windows, Celia saw the silver W tossing on the rounded flanks of the Wykoff horses. At the railroad station—or the corral called by that name—Stephen met them, Mrs. Wykoff's aged but efficient butler and general manager—the masculine equivalent of Parker. Here they were taken under the wing of that vigilance of which an accomplished servitor like Stephen makes a pride. Celia did nothing for herself, she was not even sure that she had used her own means of locomotion when she found herself seated in the best seat in the car, Parker close behind her, her light wrap and little satchel on the seat by her side, and a monthly magazine on her lap.

She had not thought of taking a book with her, and she did not even know that for this delicate attention she was indebted to Stephen's own inspiration. Later she learned of the conscientious care he had given to the selection. He felt it his duty to report his exercise of discretion to Mrs. Wykoff.

''Seeing her unprovided, ma'am,'' he explained, ''I felt that I might go so far. I would not take the responsibility of choosing what a young lady should read, but I had seen that particular paper

here on your own table, ma'am, and I run through it on the news-stand to see that there was no nudity pictures nor anything that you could object to, ma'am."

Celia hardly glanced at her magazine. She was too full of a new and sweet content to care to read any other woman's love-story. She looked out of the window, and was interested in the landscape. Perhaps no one else ever cared to look at that dull, flat country, divided between swampiness and aridity; but Celia gazed at it with an indulgence that had in it a touch of proprietorship. Most of the time, however, it pleased her to lean back in her seat and *sense* the guardianship of her lover's emissaries. It was as though the ægis of her Prince of the Golden World was stretched out over her. She had discovered Stephen sitting unobtrusively at the furthest end of the car, watching her with a steady eye that took in all her surroundings, her every movement. She half lifted her hand toward the window—he was at her side in an instant, and had raised the sash. She drew back a little from the draught—Parker silently slipped her wrap over her shoulders. At one of the stations a tall, handsome young man entered and wandered down the aisle, looking for a seat. His eye fell on the empty place next to hers; then, as if lured by some strange magnetism, that youthful masculine eye was attracted to Stephen's, sitting weazened and bent in the far corner of the car, and the young man passed on his way. Celia felt sure that if he had hesitated in the least, he would

have been snatched up and wafted into the most distant car on the train. Surely such service was sweet.

It was dusk when they arrived at the station nearest to the Wykoff's place—a summery dusk, yet chill and damp. Randolph was waiting, with his mother's victoria. He did not kiss her; he only pressed her hand and murmured "Dearest!" in stately confidence. There were people all about them; it could not be otherwise, and Celia knew it: yet somehow she felt a little disappointed —a trifle chilled.

The carriage went swiftly over the sandy roads, while Randolph talked to his betrothed in low, deep tones—talked of such things only as Parker, sitting on the box, might hear. They passed under dim trees, and through pigmy forests of underbrush, the cool gloom growing deeper and deeper. Celia listened almost in silence. An indefinable loneliness and a joyous, fluttering expectancy struggled within her. She was trying to adjust her consciousness to a sudden change in her surroundings. She felt she was more than the length of the longest railroad from Chelsea Village and Popper Leete's midday dinner.

"We didn't expect to have any one at the house except my cousins," she heard Randolph saying as her mind tried to picture the life that already seemed to have slipped far behind her; "but I've got an old college chum of mine down here for a month or two—Jack Claggett. He's an artist, and he is doing some of the decorative work on the

Coöperative Buildings. That is only one end of his cleverness. Claggett is going to be a great man some day. And then, just for to-night, we have old Jedby at dinner. He invited himself—he lives with his brother six or seven miles down the road—near Sag Harbor. He's a jolly old gossip, and used to be a friend of my father's. He's a sort of tame cat with us. But you'll see nobody else except my mother and the girls."

"The girls?" queried Celia.

"Yes, my cousins. And you've got to fall in love with them, you know. They're dear good girls. I've known them ever since they were little mites. We used to play together. Laura is uncommonly clever, and no end of fun. She's the eldest. Annette is the pretty one; but she isn't as bright as Laura. But mind, you must admire them both."

"I will if they will let me," said Celia meekly.

"Let you!" exclaimed her lover; "they will worship you—see if they don't!" And then, catching sight of Parker's back, he became silent.

They swung through a gateway in a long stone wall, and the wheels crashed up a gravelled drive. Red windows flashed out through the trees, a flood of warm light came from a broad open door, and presently Celia was standing on the veranda, receiving a motherly kiss from Mrs. Wykoff, and furtively examining two tall, pretty, and very talkative girls who had a number of unimportant things to say with bird-like volubility.

"Parker will take you to your room, my dear,"

said Mrs. Wykoff; "and she will help you to change your dress, or you shall come to dinner just as you are, whichever pleases you. Are you tired? You *are* a little pale."

"I—I have a headache, I think," faltered Celia, truly enough, for the strong, sharp sea-air had struck hard on her nerves.

"You shall have your dinner in your own room," declared Mrs. Wykoff; but Celia would not consent. It was only the ghost of a headache, and it would go away itself.

She found it very awkward to be helped by Parker, and when Parker opened her trunk and took out the contents she watched Parker's eye with uneasiness in her soul. She might as well have tried to read the eye of the sphinx.

"Which dress, mum?" inquired her assistant.

"The gray one, I think," said Celia, naming the garment on which she had placed her main reliance, as being what women call "*always* nice." It was a dark gray silk, so made as to fall, to Celia's apprehension, just about at the vanishing point or horizon-line between the heaven of full dress and the lowly simplicity of work-a-day attire—a compromise gown, in fact. And truly, the modest square-cut corsage with pretty lace (the first real lace Celia had ever bought) at the neck was as proper garb as you shall see a pretty maid in.

But when Celia saw that gray dress come out of the trunk, the kindly current of her blood flew back to her heart's chill core. Down the front in

an arabesque pattern, over the back in simulation of impossible festoons, nay, down the skirt in a mad cascade of color ran a ribbon of two shades of arsenical green, occasionally exhibiting a reverse side of pale yellow. Dorinda had done good by stealth, and had violated the sanctity of the trunk after it had been packed. Dorinda had always said that that dress lacked style.

"No, not that one," Celia said to the immovable Parker: "that is a—a mistake. There's a black silk dress there—I'll get it."

Celia blessed her mother's peculiar fancy, that was responsible for the existence of the black silk dress. "Mrs. Wykoff bein' in mournin'," Mrs. Leete had speculated, "she might like to see you in black of a Sunday. It looks more considerate."

Ten minutes after the appearance of the black silk, Celia had begun to live her dream: she sat at her lover's table; whatever this life might be for which she had yearned, she was in the midst of it. She had wished a wish, and the wish had come true, as in a fairy tale.

A dream she thought it at first. She sank into her great leather chair with a pleasant sense of physical fatigue. She saw everything in the rosy dazzle of the crimson-shaded candles. She had a vague, diffused perception of luxurious comfort. The table spread before her, a glittering, snowy plain. She heard the murmur of gentle voices all about her; even the soft laughter was musical to her ears.

It was only a moment of dreamy ecstasy. She lifted a spoonful of soup to her lips, and awoke herself to observe, to study, to learn. Eve ate of the fruit of knowledge, and the glories of uncomprehended Paradise began the slow process of resolving themselves into so much land and so much water, so many trees, so many shrubs, and so many spotted, speckled and striped birds and beasts and creeping things.

She sat at her hostess's right hand, and at the distant end of the table she saw Randolph, and saw him for the first time in all the grandeur of what she would have called his "war paint." She accepted him as a revelation, and wondered whether she had ever sufficiently revered him. When Alonzo got into evening dress, he always looked as though he might break in the middle if he were carelessly handled. Nothing of this painful effect was observable in Randolph. To her right was Mr. Jedby, an ancient beau, who had begun to wax his moustache in the Presidency of the late Louis Napoleon, but whose juvenility was otherwise carefully conserved, save in the matter of his collar, which was as high as the prevailing style required, yet, in pattern, warped somewhat by memories of an older fashion. Mr. Jedby was pouring into the ear of Miss Laura Curtis a monotonous stream of gossip, confined between walls of elegant diction. Mr. Jedby rounded his sentences as though each one was to be taken down for publication in the "Autobiography of a Diner-Out," or

the "Literary and Anecdotic Remains of Mr. Richard Jedby, edited with a preface by——."

The Lisles, Celia learnt, were at Vevey; the Oakleys at Bonn. Where the De la Hunts were he should know by the next European mail. (Mr. Jedby kept up a correspondence—a sort of gossip exchange—with all the idle widows and busy old maids of his acquaintance.) Yes, the Carroll party was in the Riviera, and they were talking, at last accounts, of a trip through the south of Italy and the Mediterranean Isles; but Mr. Jedby did not believe the plan would be carried out. Mortimer Faxon was with them, and Jack Ludlow's widow, and Mr. Jedby did not believe *she* would let *him* get too far from a legation.

"Opportunity, my dear young lady," said Mr. Jedby, "opportunity is elusive, and should be seized with promptitude and alacrity."

It was all a foreign language to Celia. Do you remember your first day at school, when you sat waiting for your assignment of lessons, and listened to the elder classes reciting Greek verbs? Some day, you knew, you would do the same thing; but what a world of unintelligibility lay before you!

Mr. Jedby had done no more than acknowledge his introduction to Miss Leete in the drawing-room, and he could not even pay attention to his dinner until he had made an end of his recital to Laura Curtis. Thus Celia was left to the ministrations of Mrs. Wykoff, who asked after each

member of the Leete family in turn. Celia answered her almost mechanically, and quietly studied Mr. Claggett, opposite her.

She did not, perhaps, formulate the idea, but she felt that Mr. Claggett did not altogether harmonize with his surroundings. It was not only that he was tall, gaunt, and breezily Western in all his ways and manners; it was not only that he was a carelessly picturesque figure in a trim and decorous picture: in some way that she did not attempt to define he differed from the types about him. She was destined to receive more light upon the subject.

Claggett was, as Randolph Wykoff frequently had occasion to assert, a good fellow. He was also a promising young artist—in his friend's eye the most promising young artist of the day. Randolph had, like most young men of his serious and earnest temperament, a circle of youthful friends who were setting out to revolutionize everything in Art, Science, Literature, and Religion, and Claggett was the coming apostle of Art. But what Harvard College had done for Mr. Claggett and what Nature had done for him were two widely different things, and out of the conflict between Nature and Education came a side-issue unpleasant for Celia.

It happened that five or six wine-glasses by her plate and a number of courses presented to her in various styles and shapes somewhat puzzled this poor novice in the ways of the Golden World. She had been trying hard to recollect what she had

learned at boarding-school of the technicalities of the social board; but unfamiliar problems arrived, and some exhibition of hesitation or indecision attracted Mr. Claggett's attention. Now it was not many years since Mr. Claggett had wondered what terrapin might be, and had boggled at croquettes and bouchées. This fact ought to have made him charitable, and given him a kindly sympathy for others in such sad condition; but the experience had, in truth, embittered the young man. Why is the "tenderfoot" ill-treated in the far West? Because the "old settler" was a new settler but yesterday. The lust of torturing awoke in Claggett's breast.

The little confabs of two or three that began a dinner had broken up. Conversation crossed and criss-crossed the table. Mr. Claggett addressed himself to Miss Leete, and began to ply her with questions in gastronomy, designed for her confusion. What were her views on the cooking of terrapin? Did she agree with a Baltimore friend of his who thought that canvas-back duck should be cooked fifty seconds to the pound?

Mrs. Wykoff, talking across the board to Mr. Jedby, noticed nothing. The Curtis girls did notice, and made one or two ineffectual diversions in Celia's behalf. Randolph had some notion that his friend was conversing in a strain foreign to the normal Claggett taste, and good-naturedly told him not to be absurd. But the baiting continued until Annette Curtis said under her breath —her face flushing hotly—"Mr. Claggett!"

Claggett, like most people who have gone too far, went a little farther.

"I was only trying to take a rise out of our young friend," he explained, aside.

He lowered his voice as he spoke; but Celia heard him, and the Curtis girls knew that she had heard. Probably no one else at the table would have known the significance of that piece of slang. But slang is a part of the modern girl's education, and Randolph's cousins were none the worse for recognizing the phrase and catching the rude allusion. They became Celia Leete's champions on the instant.

Celia's eyes flashed, but she said nothing. Mr. Claggett looked at Miss Annette Curtis's face, and was silent. The dinner was ended in peace and calm.

The good old fashion prevailed in the Wykoff household, and the gentlemen had their hour of tobacco and chartreuse. In the drawing-room Annette sang a song or two, and when the men appeared, she and Randolph set themselves to sorting out piles of sheet-music. Claggett, anxious to reëstablish himself, began a little monologue on farm-life in Wisconsin. He was a sharp observer of externals; and he told his tale with some cleverness, and he was really getting on very well when it occurred to him to inquire of Celia, with the best intentions in the world. but with an unfortunate inflection:

"Were you ever in the West, Miss Leete?"

"No," said Celia; "we have too much of the West here, as it is."

There was silence in that place for the space of a minute after this speech was uttered. An expression of puzzled surprise on Mr. Claggett's features slowly lost itself in a broad smile; but there was no smile on any other face. Annette Curtis, at the piano, let her hands wander over the keys, struck a chord or two, and said:

"Ah! that's it. Don't you want to try that anthem over with me, Laura?—*la la la la—la la!*"

Late that night Mrs. Wykoff tapped at Celia's door. Celia was sitting up, ripping the party-colored ribbon from her gray dress, and removing other superfluities, in conformity with suggestions gathered from her observation during the evening. She went guiltily to the door, and opened it half way.

"I saw the light in your room," said Mrs. Wykoff, "and I was afraid you might be ill."

"Oh, no," said Celia, very red and nervous. "I'm feeling much better—I think I'll go to bed now."

"I hope," Mrs. Wykoff continued, her brows contracted in an anxious way, "I hope you didn't mind—that Mr. Claggett did not say anything—anything that might——"

"Oh, no," Celia interrupted.

"He is peculiar. He is not exactly—Randolph is very fond of him, and he is a young man of many

excellent qualities; but his sense of humor sometimes runs away with him, I'm afraid."

"I didn't mind him the least little bit," said Celia.

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The next day there was tennis in the morning, at which Celia looked on; then a drive to the beach in the afternoon, and again Celia sat with Mrs. Wykoff and saw a quartette of athletes making merry. Randolph and Claggett and the two girls all swam until Celia shivered in wasted sympathy.

At twilight she took a little walk with Annette Curtis, and their walk brought them through a neighboring country place, a spacious old house, almost the mate of the Wykoff homestead.

"That is our place," said Annette, "or, at least, it used to be, before papa—had troubles. We used to live here when Randolph was a little boy. I don't remember much about it, because I was the baby, you know; but Laura and Randolph played together all the time. The neighbors used to call them 'the twins.' They're almost of an age—Randolph's just one week older. One day they went out in a boat together, and the boat struck a rock and sunk, and Randolph couldn't swim then, and Laura swam ashore with him. That's reversing the usual story, isn't it? And do you know he was so angry with her for being able to swim when he couldn't, that he wouldn't speak to her for ever so long?"

Thus began a summer of country life. One day

was like another. Randolph was as affectionate in private, as delicately attentive in the presence of others as his sense of the proprieties of the situation permitted him to be. Celia's status was anomalous, yet she was not uncomfortable. Although her engagement to Randolph was never hinted at, she knew that all in the house were in the secret, and that their discretion was to be trusted. There were few visitors; Mr. Jedby made rare appearances, and if Mr. Jedby knew why she was under the Wykoff roof, he gave no sign.

Claggett alone enlivened the calm monotony of Celia's days. He followed up his declaration of war with a series of attacks, in which he generally got fully the equivalent of what he gave. This warfare was carried on without the knowledge of Mrs. Wykoff. Both the combatants feared her disapprobation. Randolph, from his infinite height, saw something of it, and it annoyed him. But, in so far as it touched his own interests, he dismissed it with the reflection in which young men who are betrothed sometimes indulge themselves, that he would have to make some alterations in the character of his affianced, after the wedding. The Curtis girls saw and heard, and talked much between themselves.

And Randolph himself could not long remain in his position of uninterested superiority. There came an occasion when he was forced to see and act.

The young people were off for a day's sail, with

an incidental crabbing expedition, in Randolph's cat-boat; and toward the end of the homeward trip Celia was out of temper.

She had come down to the boat in the morning attired in what she had purchased for a "sailor costume." There was much white braid about it, and a stiff little white collar, that later was limp. Then she had found the Curtis girls in old blue flannel gowns, with water-stained silk handkerchiefs knotted loosely at their throats. Randolph had looked at her dress—put on for the first time—with as near an approach to frank surprise as he was capable of. Then she had been seasick, in a feeble, doubtful way, through all the outward sail. Then the crabbing came, to crush her with astonishment and disappointment. How could any one like such a disgusting employment? She sat in the dirty flat-bottomed boat they had hired of the neighboring fisherman: she was rowed about the glaring waters of a little cove; she gazed with abhorrence upon the squirming, uncanny crabs, the grinning fish-heads, the livid strings of soaked raw meat, and she marvelled how they could laugh and chatter and enjoy it all. She was glad Dorinda could not see her at the moment. "They," she thought—her "they" was the Wykoffs, this time, not her own family—"may be awfully swell, and we mayn't be; but I know none of *us* would think this was *nice.*"

It was on the sail home that Celia exhibited the cumulative effect of these annoyances. A bushel-basket full of crabs had been spilt in the cockpit,

and Claggett was restoring the scuttling wretches to their prison. Celia lay on the seat, trying not to be seasick. A fold of the white-braided dress hung down to the deck.

"*Do* keep those nasty things away from my skirt, Mr. Claggett!" she said, with asperity.

"Do not be too harsh with the crabs, Miss Leete," responded Claggett, unperturbed; "they are simple, humble, semi-marine creatures, and they have never seen a dress like that before. They merely wish to admire its gorgeousness. Give them a chance to make some approach to taste and fashion."

"Well," Celia returned, "they do seem to be getting away from *you* as hard as they can."

Randolph, who was at the tiller, heard this. A moment later he was called forward to the halliards, and he did not know that Celia, cheered up by her own triumph of witticism, forgot her qualms, and engaged merrily in a prolonged contest of wit with the young man from the West.

Randolph waited until he and Claggett were left to put the boat to rights for the night; and then he unburdened his mind.

"Look here, Jack," he said, kindly but firmly; "I wish you wouldn't talk to Miss Leete in the way you were talking down in the cock-pit. It's all very well, you know, between fellows, and at college, and all that sort of thing; but I think it's out of place with ladies."

"Has Miss Leete said anything to you about

it?" Claggett inquired, looking up quickly from his work.

"She has not."

"I thought not. You take things too seriously, old man. She likes it, and so would you, if you had any sense of humor. It's all pure fun and nonsense, and she's quite well able to take care of herself."

"I do not wish," said Randolph, coldly, "that Miss Leete should be obliged to take care of herself. I am the best judge in such matters; and I suppose that you understand the situation."

"No," said Claggett, standing up straight, and looking his friend in the eye: "I do *not* understand the situation."

"I am—" Randolph hesitated—"Miss Leete and I are engaged."

Unfortunately for Randolph, he could never rid himself of the idea that there was a special sanctity attaching to his private and personal affairs. When he was obliged to make even the most indirect mention of them, he assumed the tone which the boy at college tries to assume when you speak to him of his "secret society." It is the tone of stern, self-conscious dignity which some people take on in speaking of the unspeakable things of life. I knew one man, once upon a time, who used this tone whenever he had occasion to talk of a cold in the head. The members of his family seemed to be peculiarly afflicted with this ailment; and somehow, I got the idea that they were not "proper" people. Perhaps Mr. Claggett had

similar associations with the peculiar tone, for he smiled in a way that greatly irritated Mr. Wykoff. And then he dealt a blow which left his friend paralyzed and dumb with inexpressible indignation.

"Well," Mr. Claggett said, "I don't know of any man more peculiarly fitted to make her unhappy."

He shouldered the sweeps, and walked off to the boat-house. Wykoff stood still for a minute, nearly, and his soul boiled within him. He wanted to do to Claggett many things which he could not do, under the social conditions of our age. Perhaps he came near to attempting some of them. But he checked himself. Instead, he walked for half an hour on the sands, and thought it all over. It may be that he communed with the spirit of his father, for a glimmering of John Wykoff's good sense visited his excited brain. He resolved to wreak no vengeance on the irreverent Claggett, but to establish for him a suitable "place" in the social scale; to put him there, and to keep him there. He carried out his programme to the letter. He put Claggett in his "place" at once, and he kept him there. There was only one limitation to his satisfaction: Claggett never seemed to know what had happened to him.

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Celia had accommodated herself to her surroundings—how thoroughly she did not know until a little thing set her to thinking.

Old habit led her to rise early, when only the servants were stirring. The mail of the previous night was brought in from the distant post-office early in the morning, and was spread out on a table in the hall. It was a week after her arrival that Celia came down and found a letter from Dorinda awaiting her—a letter in an envelope of pink, bordered with pale blue, stamped with a huge initial L, and scented. She snatched it up with an involuntary movement of concealment; checked herself, and then walked out into the clear sunshine with a guilty and troubled heart. Was she ashamed of her own people? Or was it only that she was rightly ashamed of her people's ways? Where was she drifting—where had she drifted? Had she turned her back on the little frame house in Chelsea Village? What lay before her here in the house of strangers?

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Poor little Eve! she had to look around Paradise, and ask herself how she liked it. And she had to confess to herself that only as a mystery was it wholly delightful.

Personalities were not the staple of conversation in the Wykoff household; yet personalities there must be, and these were still Greek to Celia. And even in the employments of every day she found herself set apart from all the others. She tried to play tennis, and gave it up, after a little while. Her muscles were flaccid; her heart re-

belled at the least strain; flushing and palpitating, she went to sit with Mrs. Wykoff, an uninterested spectator. It was the same at the afternoon swim —she could not overcome her dread of the pounding surf. She tried to walk with the Curtis girls, and three miles in an hour sent her to bed sore and tired. Indeed, she reflected, she had not come there to bat tennis-balls, to swim, to tramp over sandy roads. These things had no charm for her. Perhaps the pleasantest time of all the day was when she leaned back in Mrs. Wykoff's victoria and rolled gently through the streets of the village, when the summer boarders sat on the verandas and stared hard at the plump horses and the carriage.

In August the Curtis girls went to join their mother in the Catskills. Laura went to Celia's room to bid her good-bye. She put her arms around Celia's neck. "Be good to him, my dear," she said.

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It was a dull day after they went. Mrs. Wykoff seemed to be anxious and apprehensive. Randolph was grave. Claggett was moody and cynical. Celia showed depression of spirits in her dull silence.

"I wonder if Claggett annoys her in any way," Randolph said to his mother, who only shook her head.

He saw her grow more listless day by day; but

he loyally waited for the appointed hour. When it came, he sought her out, and found her in a far corner of the old-fashioned garden.

"Celia," he said, "it is time to announce our engagement."

An hour later he walked into his mother's room, very pale, but collected, as became a Harvard man.

"It is all over, mother," he said; "and I am going away on Saturday. I think I shall go to California. I think I can do something there. I have an idea of providing proper homes for the farm-laborers."

He was John Wykoff's son, and there was no arguing with him. Mrs. Wykoff listened to all he would tell her, and then went to find Celia. Celia was in her room, packing up her clothes in hysterical haste. Mrs. Wykoff took her in her arms.

"I can't help it," Celia sobbed; "I feel mean and wicked, but I can't do anything else. I *did* love him, and I *do* think he's the best man in the world—he's just as good and noble as he can be—but I couldn't be happy this way, Mrs. Wykoff! I don't like it—I couldn't get along at all. I've made a mistake—I've made a mistake right from the first; but I won't make any more mistakes, and I won't make his life miserable because I've spoiled my own. Oh, don't be so good to me, Mrs. Wykoff—I don't deserve it—I'm a wretched girl! Just let me go home—that's where I belong!"

Mrs. Wykoff was as gentle as only a wise, kindly, worldly woman can be. She soothed poor Celia, and made her understand that, for the sake

of appearances, at least, she must out-stay the broken-hearted philanthropist bound for California. Celia stayed. Randolph made his preparations and went, hopelessly gloomy, but punctiliously courteous and considerate to the last.

After a quick fortnight, Celia knocked at Mrs. Wykoff's room to say good-bye. She tried, with a full heart, to give some measure of thanks for the kindness that was the one real thing to her in the world she was quitting. When she had made her timorous attempt, she blushed and trembled, and grew more timorous yet.

"There's something—you ought to know," she said, huskily; "I—I—I know it seems queer—but —but I couldn't help it. While Randolph—while Mr. Wykoff—while he was *here,* you know, I wouldn't listen to it; I wouldn't let him—I mean —I wouldn't have let anybody say anything to me, although we both—" Celia's voice was all but inaudible—"understood—how we felt. But now it's different, you know; and—and—Mrs. Wykoff, I'm not a wicked girl, but—I'm going to marry Mr. Claggett!"

CASPERL

CASPERL was a wood-chopper, and the son of a wood-chopper, and although he was only eighteen when his father died, he was so strong and active, that he went on chopping and hauling wood for the whole neighborhood; and people said he did it quite as well as his father, while he was certainly a great deal more pleasant in his manner and much more willing to oblige others.

It was a poor country, however, for it was right in the heart of the Black Forest, and there were more witches and fairies and goblins there than healthy human beings. So Casperl scarcely made a living, for all he worked hard and rose up early in the morning, summer and winter. His friends often advised him to go to some better place, where he could earn more money; but he only shook his head and said that the place was good enough for him.

He never told any one, though, why he loved his poor hut in the depths of the dark forest, because it was a secret which he did not wish to share with strangers. For he had discovered, a mile or two from his home, in the very blackest part of the woods, an enchanted mountain. It was a high mountain, covered with trees and rocks and thick,

tangled undergrowth, except at the very top, where there stood a castle surrounded by smooth, green lawns and beautiful gardens, which were always kept in the neatest possible order, although no gardener was ever seen.

This enchanted mountain had been under a spell for nearly two hundred years. The lovely Princess who lived there had once ruled the whole country. But a powerful and wicked magician disguised himself as a prince, and made love to her. At first the Princess loved her false suitor; but one day she found out that he was not what he pretended to be, and she told him to leave her and never to come near her again.

"For you are not a prince," she said. "You are an impostor, and I will never wed any but a true prince."

"Very well," said the magician, in a rage. "You shall wait for your true prince, if there is such a thing as a true prince; and you shall marry no one till he comes."

And then the magician cast a spell upon the beautiful castle on the top of the mountain, and the terrible forest sprang up about it. Rocks rose up out of the earth and piled themselves in great heaps among the tree-trunks. Saplings and brush and twisted, poisonous vines came to fill up every crack and crevice, so that no mortal man could possibly go to the summit, except by one path, which was purposely left clear. And in that path there was a gate that the strongest man could not open, it was so heavy. Farther up the mountain

slope, the trunk of a tree lay right across the way, —a magic tree, that no one could climb over or crawl under or cut through. And beyond the gate and the tree was a dragon with green eyes that frightened away every man that looked at it.

And there the beautiful Princess was doomed to live until the True Prince should arrive and overcome these three obstacles.

Now, although none of the people in the forest, except Casperl, knew of the mountain or the Princess, the story had been told in many distant countries, and year after year young princes came from all parts of the earth to try to rescue the lovely captive and win her for a bride. But, one after the other, they all tried and failed,—the best of them could not so much as open the gate.

And so there the Princess remained, as the years went on. But she did not grow any older, or any less beautiful, for she was still waiting for the True Prince, and she believed that some day he would come.

This was what kept Casperl from leaving the Black Forest. He was sorry for the Princess, and he hoped some day to see her rescued and wedded to the True Prince.

Every evening when his work was done, he would walk to the foot of the mountain, and sit down on a great stone, and look up to the top, where the Princess was walking in her garden. And as it was an enchanted mountain, he could see her clearly, although she was so far away.

Yes, he could see her face as well as though she were close by him, and he thought it was truly the loveliest face in the world.

There he would sit and sadly watch the princes who tried to climb the hill. There was scarcely a day that some prince from a far country did not come to make the attempt. One after another, they would arrive with gorgeous trains of followers, mounted on fine horses, and dressed in costumes so magnificent that a plain cloth-of-gold suit looked shabby among them. They would look up to the mountain-top and see the Princess walking there, and they would praise her beauty so warmly that Casperl, when he heard them, felt sure he was quite right in thinking her the loveliest woman in the world.

But every prince had to make the trial by himself. That was one of the conditions which the magician made when he laid the spell upon the castle; although Casperl did not know it.

And each prince would throw off his cloak, and shoulder a silver or gold-handled axe, and fasten his sword by his side, and set out to climb the hill, and open the gate, and cut through the fallen tree, and slay the dragon, and wed the Princess.

Up he would go, bright and hopeful, and tug away at the gate until he found that he could do nothing with it, and then he would plunge into the tangled thickets of underbrush, and try his best to fight his way through to the summit.

But every one of them came back, after a while, with his fine clothes torn and his soft skin

scratched, all tired and disheartened and worn out. And then he would look spitefully up at the mountain, and say he didn't care so much about wedding the Princess, after all; that she was only a common enchanted princess, just like any other enchanted princess, and really not worth so much trouble.

This would grieve Casperl, for he couldn't help thinking that it was impossible that any other woman could be as lovely as *his* Princess. You see, he called her *his* Princess, because he took such an interest in her, and he didn't think there could be any harm in speaking of her in that way, just to himself. For he never supposed she could even know that there was such a humble creature as poor young Casperl, the wood-chopper, who sat at the foot of the hill and looked up at her.

And so the days went on, and the unlucky princes came and went, and Casperl watched them all. Sometimes he saw his Princess look down from over the castle parapets, and eagerly follow with her lovely eyes the struggles of some brave suitor through the thickets, until the poor Prince gave up the job in despair. Then she would look sad and turn away. But generally she paid no attention to the attempts that were made to reach her. That kind of thing had been going on so long that she was quite used to it.

By and by, one summer evening, as Casperl sat watching, there came a little prince with a small train of attendants. He was rather undersized for a prince; he didn't look strong, and he did

look as though he slept too much in the morning and too little at night. He slipped off his coat, however, and climbed up the road, and began to push and pull at the gate.

Casperl watched him carelessly for a while, and then, happening to look up, he saw that the Princess was gazing sadly down on the poor little Prince as he tugged and toiled.

And then a bold idea came to Casperl. Why shouldn't he help the Prince? He was young and strong; he had often thought that if he were a prince, a gate like that should not keep him away from the Princess. Why, indeed, should he not give his strength to help to free the Princess? And he felt a great pity for the poor little Prince, too.

So he walked modestly up the hill and offered his services to the Prince.

"Your Royal Highness," he said, "I am only a wood-chopper; but, if you please, I am a strong wood-chopper, and perhaps I can be of use to you."

"But why should you take the trouble to help me?" inquired the Prince. "What good will it do you?"

"Oh, well!" said Casperl, "it is helping the Princess, too, don't you know?"

"No, I don't know," said the Prince. "However, you may try what you can do. Here, put your shoulder to this end of the gate, and I will stand right behind you."

Now, Casperl did not know that it was forbid-

den to any suitor to have help in his attempt to climb the hill. The Prince knew it, though, but he said to himself, "When I am through with this wood-chopper I will dismiss him, and no one will know anything about it. I can never lift this gate by myself. I will let him do it for me, and thus I shall get the Princess, and he will be just as well satisfied, for he is only a wood-chopper."

So Casperl put his broad shoulder to the gate and pushed with all his might. It was very heavy, but after a while it began to move a little.

"Courage, your Royal Highness!" said Casperl. "We'll move it, after all." But if he had looked over his shoulder he would have seen that the little Prince was not pushing at all, but that he had put on his cloak, and was standing idly by, laughing to himself at the way he was making a wood-chopper do his work for him.

After a long struggle, the gate gave way, and swung just wide enough to let them through. It was a close squeeze for the Prince; but Casperl held the gate open until he slipped through.

"Dear me," said the Prince, "you're quite a strong fellow. You really were of some assistance to me. Let me see, I think the stories say something about a tree, or some such thing, farther up the road. As you are a wood-chopper, and as you have your axe with you, perhaps you might walk up a bit and see if you can't make yourself useful."

Casperl was quite willing, for he began to feel

that he was doing something for the Princess, and it pleased him to think that even a wood-chopper could do her a service.

So they walked up until they came to the tree. And then the Prince drew out his silver axe, and sharpened it carefully on the sole of his shoe, while Casperl picked up a stone and whetted his old iron axe, which was all he had.

"Now," said the Prince, "let's see what we can do."

But he really didn't do anything. It was Casperl who swung his axe and chopped hard at the magic tree. Every blow made the chips fly; but the wood grew instantly over every cut, just as though he had been cutting into water.

For a little while the Prince amused himself by trying first to climb over the tree, and then to crawl under it. But he soon found that, whichever way he went, the tree grew up or down so fast that he was shut off. Finally he gave it up, and went and lay down on his back on the grass, and watched Casperl working.

And Casperl worked hard. The tree grew fast, but he chopped faster. His forehead was wet and his arms were tired, but he worked away and made the chips fly in a cloud. He was too busy to take the time to look over his shoulder, so he did not see the Prince lying on the grass. But every now and then he spoke cheerily, saying, "We'll do it, your Royal Highness!"

And he did it, in the end. After a long, long while, he got the better of the magic tree, for he

chopped quicker than it could grow, and at last he had cut a gap right across the trunk.

The Prince jumped up from the grass and leaped nimbly through, and Casperl followed him slowly and sadly, for he was tired, and it began to occur to him that the Prince hadn't said anything about the Princess, which made him wonder if he were the True Prince, after all. "I'm afraid," he thought, "the Princess won't thank me if I bring her a prince who doesn't love her. And it really is very strange that this Prince has n't said a word about her."

So he ventured to remark, very meekly:

"Your Royal Highness will be glad to see the Princess."

"Oh, no doubt," said the Prince.

"And the Princess will be very glad to see your Royal Highness," went on Casperl.

"Oh, of course," said the Prince.

"And your Royal Highness will be very good to the Princess," said Casperl further, by way of a hint.

"I think," said the Prince, "that you are talking altogether too much about the Princess. I don't believe I need you any more. Perhaps you would better go home. I'm much obliged to you for your assistance. I can't reward you just now, but if you will come to see me after I have married the Princess, I may be able to do something for you."

Casperl turned away, somewhat disappointed,

and was going down the hill, when the Prince called him back.

"Oh, by the way!" he said; "there's a dragon, I understand, a little farther on. Perhaps you'd like to come along and see me kill him?"

Casperl thought he would like to see the Prince do something for the Princess, so he followed meekly on. Very soon they came to the top of the mountain, and saw the green lawns and beautiful gardens of the enchanted castle,—and there was the dragon waiting for them.

The dragon reared itself on its dreadful tail, and flapped its black wings; and its great green, shining, scaly body swelled and twisted, and it roared in a terrible way.

The little Prince drew his jewelled sword and walked slowly up to the monster. And then the great beast opened its red mouth and blew out one awful breath, that caught the Prince up as if he were a feather, and whisked him clear off the mountain and over the tops of the trees in the valley, and that was the last any one ever saw of him.

Then Casperl grasped his old axe and leaped forward to meet the dragon, never stopping to think how poor his weapon was. But all of a sudden the dragon vanished and disappeared and was gone, and there was no trace of it anywhere; but the beautiful Princess stood in its place, and smiled and held out her white hand to Casperl.

"My Prince!" she said, "so you have come at last!"

"I beg your gracious Highness's pardon," said Casperl; "but I am no Prince."

"Oh, yes, you are," said the Princess; "how did you come here, if you are not my True Prince? Didn't you come through the gate and across the tree, and haven't you driven the dragon away?"

"I only helped—" began Casperl.

"You did it all," said the Princess, "for I saw you. Please don't contradict a lady."

"But I don't see how I could—" Casperl began again.

"People who are helping others," said the Princess, "often have a strength beyond their own. But perhaps you didn't come here to help me, after all?"

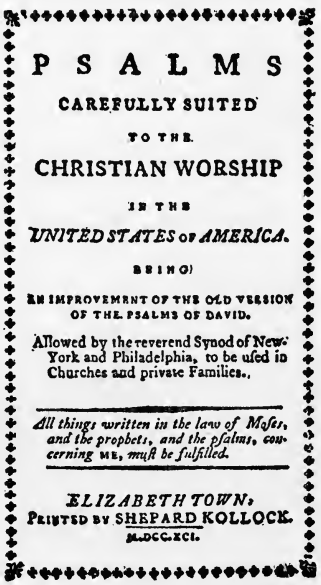
"Oh, your gracious Highness," cried Casperl, "there's nothing I wouldn't do to help you. But I'm sure I'm not a Prince."

"And I am sure you are," said the Princess, and she led him to a fountain near by, and when he looked at his reflection in the water, he saw that he was dressed more magnificently than any prince who ever yet had come to the enchanted mountain.

And just then the wedding-bells began to ring, and that is all I know of the fairy story, for Casperl and the Princess lived so happily ever after in the castle on top of the mountain that they never came down to tell the rest of it.

A SECOND-HAND STORY

I HAVE a small book, and a small story, that I bought, the two together, for fifteen cents. He thought, I suppose, that he was selling the book alone; and I must admit that it was but a shabby sort of book. You will hardly find it in the catalogues. It is not a first edition. It is not a tall copy—it is a squat little volume, in truth. It bears a modest *imprimatur*.


PSALMS
CAREFULLY SUITED
TO THE
CHRISTIAN WORSHIP
IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
BEING
AN IMPROVEMENT OF THE OLD VERSION OF THE PSALMS OF DAVID.
Allowed by the reverend Synod of New-York and Philadelphia, to be used in Churches and private Families.
All things written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning ME, *must be fulfilled.*
ELIZABETH TOWN,
PRINTED BY SHEPARD KOLLOCK.
M.DCC.XCI.

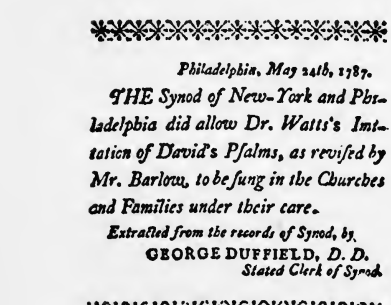
The title-page reads thus:

"Oh, I don't know," said the bookseller, as I leaned over the "second-hand counter," and held it up to him. "Fifteen cents, if you want it. Now, *here's* something you ought to see——"

But I did not care to see it. I took my fifteen cents' worth away, and asked myself in what Elizabethtown it was printed; what manner of

man Shepard Kollock might have been; but most, what human being owned this little book, handled it, read it, sang from it—belonged to it, in short, as we all belong to our books.

I am told that to the man who has determined to hand his conscience over to the keeping of an established church this much liberty of personal choice is conceded: that he may elect to which one of the established churches he will make delivery. Of this initial liberty of personal choice I shall take advantage in my search after truth. To discover the true history of this volume, I must accept certain premises, and draw conclusions therefrom. If the conclusions are wrong, the premises are clearly to blame, and I am not.



Philadelphia, May 24th, 1787.

THE Synod of New-York and Philadelphia did allow Dr. Watts's Imitation of David's Pſalms, as reviſed by Mr. Barlow, to be ſung in the Churches and Families under their care.

Extracted from the records of Synod, by,
GEORGE DUFFIELD, *D. D.*
Stated Clerk of Synod.

Now, I find, on the second page, behind the title, this official commission of the book:

Hence we may set out with the almost certain knowledge that this copy of Mr. Barlow's revision was owned in Pennsylvania, in New York, or in New Jersey, tucked away between them. If the owner were a Pennsylvanian, why did the book not drift, in the end, to Philadelphia instead of to New York?—there are book-shops in Philadelphia, I think. I found it in New York, yet I hardly think it was first sold there. Dr. Watts

must have been tongueless among the Dutch churches in 1791, and he could hardly have been made welcome among the modish Church-of-England sinners in Trinity or St. John's. It was in New Jersey, then, that she lived—for I have decided that this book was owned by a woman and that her name was Prudence—in New Jersey, perhaps on some rich lowland along the calm Passaic.

I have a fancy that I know the place. It is a small town, set between the river and the softly rising hills that slope and fall and slope and fall to the feet of the Orange Mountains. Half-way up the long main street lies a little triangle of green, bounded by posts and chains, that is called "the square." The church stands on the highest side, a solid building of reddish-brown stone, with plain rectangular windows, that look blankly out from their many panes of pale green flint glass. It has a squat wooden spire, painted white—a white that has been softened and made pleasant to the eye by the ministrations of the weather. Directly opposite the church is a large square house of brick, with stone about the doors and windows, and with a little white-painted Grecian portico—on that the paint is ever white and new, defying the kindly hand of time. That is the Squire's house, and that is where Prudence lives.

There are trees all around the square, and trees in it—chestnuts and graceful beeches and young oaks—trees that seem to bring something of the wood into the heart of the town. You will not see the great drooping arbors of the New England

elms, set at regular intervals, massive, shapely, and urban. These are children of the forest, not afraid to venture into the little town and to scatter themselves about her grassy streets.

Their boughs, that wave in the sunlight, are almost the only things that move, early of a summer Sunday morning. The front doors are closed that of a week-day open wide their broad upper halves. There are no people in the streets. Everybody is within doors, making ready for church. Even the dogs refrain from running about the highways and byways on the aimless errands which dogs affect; they lie in the sun on the doorsteps and wait the appearance of that human world of which they are but a humble auxiliary. Perhaps Prudence, pinning her neckerchief before her dressing glass, gives a look through her window—hers is the little room over the front door—the window with the fan-light at the top—and smiles to see the sunshine and the billowing leaves flickering red and green; but she is the only woman in the town who has a thought to give to anything save the great business of Sunday morning tiring.

At last the old sexton stalks across the square, and opens the church doors with his huge iron key. Out of the sunlight he vanishes into the black hollow of the vestibule; there is silence for a moment, then the husky whir of the rope over the wooden wheel on high, and the bell clangs out brazen and loud, and the startled birds rise for a second above the tree-tops, and Sunday life begins.

You will not see Prudence until all the townspeople and the farmers from the country round about are seated in the pews—not until the Dominie appears at the side door of the church. Then the broad portal of the Squire's house springs open and the Squire marches forth, looking larger than ever in his Sunday black. There is a sombre grandeur about the very silk stockings on his sturdy old legs. Behind him comes Cæsar—black Cæsar—his wool as white as the Squire's powdered wig. Cæsar has his kit in his hand; he plays the first fiddle in the choir, and thereby enjoys a proud eminence above all the other negroes in the neighborhood. Moreover, he has been a freeman since the first squire died.

Prudence walks by her father's side. The white neckerchief is folded over her breast; her dress is gray; her eyes are gray and dove-like. She holds her hymn-book and a spray of caraway in one hand; the other lifts her clinging skirt. The Squire looks straight ahead as he walks, and Cæsar looks straight at the Squire's back. But Prudence's soft eyes wander a little. Perhaps she is not sorry that the Squire walks slowly; that she has these few moments under the trees and among the birds before the great bare hollow of the church swallows her up for the two long hours of service.

As Prudence sits in her pew to-day—the front pew to the left of the aisle as you face the Dominie—she is conscious that there is among the worshippers a concentration of furtive attention upon

the pew behind her—the one where old Jan Onderdonck used to sit until he went to finish his mortal slumbers in the graveyard. She does not wonder who may be there; she is too good a girl for that. But she cannot help remembering that she will know when church is out. And now she rises to sing in the hymn, and—she must have been wondering, in spite of herself, or why is there such a guilty start and thrill under the white neckerchief when she hears the strong barytone voice rise resonant behind her? The little brown hymn-book trembles in her hands; she knows she is a wicked girl, and yet—perhaps it is part of her wickedness that she cannot feel properly unhappy. Nay, she knows there is a jubilant lilt in her voice as it joins the strange voice and sings:

> "Happy the heart where graces reign,
> Where love inspires the breast;
> Love is the brightest of the train,
> And strengthens all the rest."

Her father turned half around where he stood, as a pillar of the church turning on its base, and gazed at the stranger. Prudence could not turn; she could only glance shyly at her father. He had his Sunday face on, and she knew that he would not relax a muscle of it until he had shaken hands with the Dominie in the porch.

I do not know what else Prudence sang that day out of the brown hymn-book. Perhaps it was "*The Shortness and Misery of Life*," or "*The*

World's Three Chief Temptations," or *"Corrupt Nature from Adam,"* or *"The Song of Zacharias, and the Message of John the Baptist;"* but I do know that, as she was going out of church, Prudence did something she had never done since, ten years before, her father put her dead mother's hymn-book into her small hand and told her it was hers. She left it lying on the seat behind her. It did not lie there long; she was not two steps down the aisle before the tall, broad-shouldered young man in the pew behind had presented it to her with a low bow. She took it with a frightened courtesy, and went down the aisle, her heart beating hard. Indeed, now, there was no doubt about it. She was sinful, perverse, and wholly unregenerate to the last degree. She wondered if iniquity so possessed other girls. And just in that moment when he bowed she had noticed that he had fine eyes, and that he wore his black clothes with an air of distinction. Of what use was it to go to church at all, if such sinfulness was ingrained in her?

. . . . . .

The disturbed dust was settling down on the pulpit cushion once more. The Dominie and the Squire stood in front of the church. The Dominie was powdering himself with snuff, as he always did after a hard sermon, and waiting for his regular invitation to dinner. The Squire, however, was not as prompt as usual to-day. His eyes followed a broad-shouldered figure in black clothes of

foreign cut, that strolled idly through the square.

"Dr. Kuypers," he finally demanded, "who is that young man?"

"That," said the Dominie, as he put his snuff-box in his pocket, "is Rick Onderdonck, or, I might better say, Master Richard Onderdonck, the son of our old friend Jan Onderdonck, now at rest. He has been these four years in Germany, where he has learnt a pretty deal of Latin, I must say for him."

The Squire shook his head.

"A godless country for a boy," he said. "I hope he got no worse than Latin there."

"Nay, nay," said the Dominie, indulgently; "I find him a good youth, and uncorrupted. He came home but yesterday, and stays with me till his father's house shall be aired. He will work the old farm, he says, and I trust his Latin may do him no harm."

"Dr. Kuypers," and the Squire bowed with solemn courtesy, "I shall be honored with your company at dinner, and with that of Mr. Onderdonck." Then he dropped to a simple week-day tone: "Four years, Dominie, four years, is it since you and I and Jan Onderdonck sat at dinner together? Yes, bring the lad."

And Prudence, during this conversation, stood at her father's elbow and said nothing at all, as was decorous in a young girl.

Dr. Kuypers was a terrible man in the pulpit, and a kind-hearted and merry man out of it. The Sunday dinners in the great brick house were

always the brighter for his coming; and if this dinner seemed to Prudence the brightest she had ever known, the credit must have been due to Dr. Kuypers, for young Mr. Onderdonck was certainly most quiet and modest, and contented himself for the most part with giving fitting and well-considered answers to the questions of the elder gentlemen as to his studies and the state of Europe.

The dinner came to an end long before Prudence wished it. And yet, at the end, there was a new and delightful experience for her, which she fled to her room to dream over.

She was only nineteen; she sat at the head of the table, but it was only as she had sat since she was a little girl, just learning to pour her father's coffee, and she had always been a little girl to the Squire and the Dominie. But to-day, when she rose from her seat, Mr. Onderdonck rose too, and hurried to open the door for her, and bowed low as she went out—and, O wondrous day!—as if this were not joy enough, she saw over her shoulder that her father and the Dominie rose too, and stood until the door had closed behind her.

Mr. Rick Onderdonck was modest even after Mistress Prudence had left the room. I think that the deference of young men toward their elders will not die out in this world while old men have fair daughters. Mr. Onderdonck took his portion of post-prandial Schnapps, and patiently let the Squire and the Dominie whet their rusty Latin on his brand-new learning.

. . . . . .

Of course, Prudence married Rick Onderdonck. That was written from the beginning. Why should it not be so? What had the Squire to say against the pretensions of young Rick Onderdock, heritor of all the square miles of green upland that had once belonged to old Jan, owner of seventy slaves, a virtuous and a comely man, with very pretty manners in the presence of his elders? Why, nothing. He might, indeed, have said that the house would be lonelier than he had thought without Prudence silently flitting here and there; but it was not the Squire's way to give such reasons as that: and so the young people were betrothed early in the spring that followed that first winter when the neighborhood remarked that Rick Onderdonck had taken to going to the Squire's house more than his father ever did.

I don't think the hymn-book saw much of their courtship, although, to be sure, Mr. Onderdonck probably went to church quite regularly during that period of probation. But she sang in the pew in front and he in the pew behind her, and the most that the hymn-book could know of what either of them felt was that her fingers tightened on its smooth cover whenever she heard his voice.

But she probably confided some thoughts of her heart to the little book that had been her mother's when she came to pack up her "things" a day or two before the wedding—I mean her personal belongings—the trifles dear to her heart.

For days the ox-carts had creaked and groaned up the rough hill roads to the Onderdonck farm-

house, leaving great loads of tables, and chairs, and wardrobes, and chests of drawers, and corded boxes that held hundreds of yards of sweet-clover scented linen, and dresses made by modish seamstresses in New York, and even liberal gifts from the Squire's store of family silver. But besides such things as these, there is always the pitiful little kit that a girl makes up when she leaves the old home-roof and takes ship on the great sea of wifehood.

This was truly a kit, done up in the red bandanna handkerchief that old Susan, her nurse (Cæsar's wife, in her lifetime), had given her long ago. For that matter, all the poor treasures had been given to her. There was this little hymn-book, first of all, and the gold chain and locket with her mother's miniature. Prudence sometimes looked at her mother's portrait and wondered if those gentle blue eyes had not looked frightened when the Squire proposed to marry them. Then there were the emery-bag and scissors she had got at school, for working the neatest sampler, and there was the sampler to speak for itself. There was the ivory ship that Ezra Saunders had carved for her—Ezra, the dry, shrivelled old cobbler, from some strange, far place in New England, who had followed the sea in his younger days, and whose dark back room in the cabin by the river-side was hung with sharks' teeth and sword-fish spears, and ingeniously carved stay-bones, with a smell of sandalwood about them all, wrapping north and south and east and west in one atmos-

phere of spicy oriental mystery. There, too, was her collection of trinkets—an enamelled broach, a tall tortoise-shell comb, a garnet ring or two, and such modest odds and ends as served her for jewellery. And all of these she did up in the red bandanna handkerchief, with a guilty feeling, as though she were deserting her girlish life after an ungrateful fashion, and maybe the brown book was sensible of some poor unformulated prayers for the strange future.

And so it came about—for the contents of the handkerchief went up to her new home the day before the wedding—that the hymn-book was not in church when she was married. If it had been, I think it would have lain open at page 271, as old Cæsar's bow slid softly over the strings, and the congregation sang:

> "Thy wife shall be a fruitful vine,
> Thy children, round thy board,
> Each, like a plant of honor, shine,
> And learn to fear the Lord."

. . . . . .

So now we have the brown hymn-book at home in the Onderdonck homestead, a long, low building, the lower story of red stone, the upper of wood. It stood high up on the hills, and looked down over grassy slopes of meadowland across the tops of the trees in the town, to the clear, shining line of the river, that ran in pleasant curves as far as the eye could follow it.

It is here that Prudence begins and ends her life. For the best of life begins where she began in the old farm-house, and what end the world saw she made there.

There life's new joys and life's new troubles began: the new joy of two living one life together; and then the great and awful trouble of childbirth —the worst forgotten, however, as she lay in Grandmother Onderdonck's four-poster bed and heard the sharp, small, querulous wailing from the next room. I think that was of a Saturday morning in May, and I am sure that on the Sunday she sent Rick to church to receive the congratulations of the neighborhood, and lay in her bed the while, and perhaps turned over a page or two of the hymn-book, finding a comfort in its terror-fraught pages which our generation might seek in vain. Then old Mother Sturt, who brought all the town's babies into the world, took the book away from her, for fear it might hurt her dear eyes; and she lay there and hummed the familiar airs under her breath, and if the tune was sweet to her memory it mattered little though the words ran:

> "Shouldst thou condemn my soul to hell,
> And crush my flesh to dust,
> Heav'n would approve thy vengeance well,
> And earth must own it just."

The time went slowly, lying there in the white waste of the four-poster bed; but it came to an end in time, and there was a day when she went up the church aisle on her husband's arm, just after the

sermon, and Dominie Kuypers sprinkled water on the head of the infant, conceived in sin and born in iniquity, and totally unconscious of it, the while the choir sang:

> "Thus Lydia sanctified her house,
> When she received the word;
> Thus the believing jailer gave
> His household to the Lord."

There were other children after that boy, and Prudence found her days well filled up with the little duties of a woman's life—those little duties which would distress women less could they but see the grand total and estimate the value of it. Prudence must have had some blessed comprehension of the worth of a woman's work who does her duty as wife and mother, for I can see her going about her daily tasks with a sweet and placid face, and lifting tender welcoming eyes to her husband as he comes home at sunset from some far corner of the farm—those sweet gray eyes that were content, only a little while ago, with the light of the sun on the trees and the gay face of the summer-clad world.

It was a serious face, sometimes, that met her look, for Rick was a man who took on his broad shoulders some share of the world's burdens beyond his necessary stint. They had a troublous time when they made up their minds to let their slaves work out their freedom. It was some years before Rick regained his popularity among the neighbors; he had practically manumitted his en-

tire holding of slaves, and although such an act might have been forgiven to mere benevolence, it was a crime against the community when it was dictated by principle. Rick had a sad scene with the old Squire, who all but cursed him for his foreign atheistical notions; and even good Dominie Kuypers looked gravely disappointed. They did not, in fact, fully restore Rick to favor until it became clear beyond a doubt that the farm was paying better under a system of free labor than it had ever paid while it supported a horde of irresponsible slaves. When that fact was proved beyond a doubt, the most notoriously mean man in the county ordered his slaves to work out their freedom at the highest market-price; and, after that, the curse was taken off Rick and Prudence.

. . . . . .

The shutters of the old farm-house are closed. The broad spread of fields is empty of all but waving grain and nodding corn. The farm-hands stand about the kitchen door, looking strange in their Sunday clothes of black. At the front door stands young Jan Onderdonck, a shapely boy of eighteen, looking out on the world with that white, blank face which the first sight of death among his own puts on a boy. He meets the neighbors as they drive up to the gate in swaying carryalls or lumbering wagons, and goes silently before them to the door. They go in, out of the clear, summer sunshine, leaving the slope of long, unmown grass, the beds of bright flowers, the tremulous green

beeches behind them, into the dim, cool front sitting-room, and range themselves along the wall. Friend bows to friend, in a constrained fashion, and here and there are hushed interchanges of speech. "She is taking it hard, poor soul," they say; "but so quiet and still, the doctor was frightened for her."

Across the hall he lies, in the room opened only for company. The air is close; the shutters will not let the scent of the rose-bushes enter. His calm face looks up to the cracked, whitewashed ceiling of the plain old house that was his home a few hours ago. How calm it is! How calm, to leave behind such a void, so much and so unconquerable grief! Yet, would we have the shadow and impress of our sorrow on his face? Good man, good husband, good father, he is gone. And this poor face that lies here to tell us of him, let us be thankful that it smiles calmly as our poor bewildered eyes look at it for the last time.

The darkest room in all the dim, closed house is where Prudence sits, on the floor above. There is a child at each side of her, and when her hands are not clasped trembling in her lap, they move to touch the soft, tear-wet faces. And now the eldest son comes softly into the room and slips his arm about her, and a quick tremor shakes her, and she hears the voice of the old minister, standing upon the stairs, midway between the dead and the living half of one existence, speaking the words that part husband and wife upon this earth. There is a silence, and then the voices of the singers come

with a far-away sound from the rooms below. One of the children, with a child's poor, helpless effort to serve, slips the book into her hands. She cannot open it; she could not see the page; she does not need it. She knows the words; only two lines come new to her ears—"Nor should we wish the hours more slow, to keep us from our love."

. . . . . .

It has been dropping light showers all the afternoon; showers that have caught the first swaths of the cut grass. Then there has been the brief glow of a high-hung rainbow, and the warm sun has come to rest a few minutes on the long heaps of grass, and to distil from them an exquisite attar of new-mown hay. The sun is behind the hills now; the front of the old farm-house where Prudence is sitting in shade. She looks across her flower-beds, down the long slope to where, beyond town and trees, there is still a warm light on the winding Passaic, that goes, presently, creeping up the farther hills, and last of all resting on the white houses of a little settlement that perched on those hills—how many years ago? Prudence forgets: many years ago, yet long since the one date from which she reckons all her days. Rick never saw it. The woods were there when he died.

For thirty years Prudence has seen the sun rise and set since he died. Thirty summers she has tended the garden he dug for her in their honeymoon. The house he left empty is still home to her, to his children, and to his children's children.

The fires have long gone out in the house where she was born; she looks now over the smokeless chimney; but his home is still as he would wish to find it were he coming home this evening across the sweet fields.

Prudence, sitting there, sees his grandson coming homeward now. She knows the broad shoulders and the springy gait. She has always called the boy Richard, though every one else calls him Rick. She knows, too, the girlish figure by his side; she knows that he will go past the gate and through the woods to the Van Vorst farm. Yes, on he goes, bending his tall head to talk with Mary Van Vorst.

Prudence's face is sweet and her eyes are patient; but who shall blame her if the longing of her heart springs up and knows not day or years? What days or years shall touch that immortal youth? Has the summer grown old? Has the green of the world grown dull, and the gold of the sun grown dim? He walked with her then, and the hay smelt as it smells to-day; the twilight air grew tender and misty about them, the murmur of woodland life made the cool darkness shrill, and the young stars came out in the vague blue of the sky.

What has grown old? What is changed in her heart that it should not cry out for love and joy? Why may she not feel his strong arm about her shoulders, hear his voice in her ears? Why may she not look up now and see his face bent over hers, love speaking to love in their eyes?

A small brown book slips from her hand and

falls upon the ground; but she does not need the printed page. She knows the hymn by heart. The bassoon and the fiddle play softly in the choir of the old church; she hears them faintly, for her heart is fluttering; her hands are cold, there is a mist of tears in her eyes as she looks up into her husband's face, standing before the altar.

It must have been on some evening such as this that the little book dropped from Prudence's hands for the last time. For unless it fell there, and lay among the flowers, and the flowers were untended after her death, so that some stranger picked it up and took it away as a thing of no account, I cannot tell why her children let their mother's book find its way into a second-hand book-shop. I am glad that in the end it did not fall into the hands of some one who might not have known her story.

MRS. TOM'S SPREE

THERE was high carnival held in Northoak one breezy August day some twenty odd years ago, in a time when the weather seems to me, as I look back on it, much more genially bracing and inspiriting than the weather we have nowadays. I am sure of one thing: we have no better days now than that day, none when the breeze blows more briskly, cool, and soft than it blew that day up and down the rolling hillsides of Northoak, fluttering bright ribbons along every road and path.

It had been a carnival summer for Northoak—though, to be sure, the revellers had very little thought that they were bidding farewell to the delights of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and were much astounded when the penitential day arrived. And on that August morning it was far enough off yet, and all they had to do was to be gay.

Now, Northoak had never been gay before. Contented, happy, and well-to-do it had always been; but it reached its high-water mark of festivity each year with the regular annual lawn-party (called a *fête champêtre* by those who were wise in such things), which each family among the landed gentry took its turn at giving. One year it

was the Westfields, another year the Lydeckers, the next the Turners, and this year perhaps the Brinckerhoffs. But it was always pretty much the same lawn-party; and while it was sure to be correct, decorous, discreetly liberal in material gratifications, and possibly enjoyable, it could not fairly—it would not if it could—have been called gay.

The gayety of that long-ago summer came to Northoak from outside, and was rather in Northoak than of it. And perhaps its character, as well as its relation to Northoak life, may be summed up in the statement that it was hotel gayety.

For the curse of the summer hotel had come upon Northoak, and Northoak had received it with dignified submission, accepting it perhaps as a punishment for the sins of well-bred pride and polite self-complacency.

The place had always been well satisfied with itself. The little village had been satisfied to be a little village, with a few small shops bidding lazily for the custom of the people on the "estates." The estates certainly could look contentedly down from their uplands and rejoice in their well-cultivated acres and in their substantial houses.

These houses—the older ones, at least—were dwellings of an interesting and significant type, much in favor in northern New York. Their pattern is best described by saying that they had their front door at the back. The front must surely have been the end with the great Doric portico looking out on the lawn. Yet you entered at the

other end, and found a broad hall, perhaps with two reception-rooms. If the reception-rooms were there, you went into one or the other before you were announced in the large drawing-room beyond the hall. And if you were there to sell rose-bushes, or to collect money for the heathen, or to take orders for wine, the host came to you in the room on the right. But if you were there to make a call, the hostess came and led you forth from the room on the left to the grander chamber that looked out upon the lawn.

You may gather from this that Northoak had an aristocracy and something of a feudal system. It had both and they were curiously well developed and firmly established for a downright rural community. This maintenance of an old-world social system in a democratic new-world was characteristic of the elder and larger towns of the State. It existed here because Northoak was originally a settlement of what are called retired business men, who rented their New York houses and gardens seventy-five or eighty years ago and turned themselves into country gentlemen. Their grandsons still collected rent for the same property, only they leased factories and warehouses; and they spent thousands where their grandfathers had spent hundreds, to live just about as their grandfathers had lived.

This state of affairs may seem most iniquitous to some, but I can testify that when I first went to Northoak, toward the end of my boyhood, Northoak great and Northoak small were well pleased

with themselves and with each other, and that the stranger soon became sincerely attached to both.

I was but a summer boarder in the village; but summer boarders were rare birds in those days, and if they were birds of any sort of social plumage they were courteously entreated and well fed by the hospitable folk of the estates. It was in Northoak that I wore my first dress-coat to my first grand dinner, and I remember just how proud and just how uncomfortable I was. I would have died for the aristocracy that night—died conscious of my tails, but loyal.

But, if the village had sinned, retribution had come upon it. For the third time I came to Northoak in June, and lo! the village did not know itself, and indeed was no more a village, but a nameless suburb of a summer hotel.

Some sordid scout of the capitalists had found out what we of the elect few had found out long before—that Northoak was pretty and healthful. And so he desecrated Northoak in giving it over to the populace. Now the great hotel stood there, glaring in its paint of reddish-yellow and reddish-brown, and ten splendid elms had been done to death that it might rear its hideous mansard-roof above its three-storied veranda. Inside of it there were white kalsomined bedrooms, a great "general office," and a greater dining-room, with frescoed ceilings and gorgeous fittings of black walnut and gilt, in the taste of what has been aptly called "the Jim Fisk era." Then there were "French bronze" chandeliers that were neither French nor

bronze, puffed upholstery of blue and yellow satin, carpets where gigantic flowers spread luxuriously over a white ground, walls covered with velvet paper—the hotel had every attraction that went to make up elegance and completeness in those happy days when we knew no better.

The elegance had spread to the poor little village. The grocery was an emporium; the thread-and-needle shop was a bazaar—with only two *a*'s. The honest old village inn was gone, with its innocent "Philadelphia and XXX ales," and in its place was a gaudily painted frame building, of which the first floor was a sample-room. Above the sample-room, reached by a side stairway, was a mysterious apartment into which men entered at all hours of the night, and whence they emerged, as a rule, at about five or six in the morning. The unceasing click of the roulette-ball, clearly audible on the street below, announced that a "quiet little game" was going on in the "club-house."

These things changed the face of the town, but the people brought a greater change. It was an early year in that series of years which linked the close of the war to the panic of 1873—a year, like its fellows, of general extravagance and ostentation. Thousands of people were rich who had never expected to be. Shoddy had stood the good fairy to some of them; others had found wealth in government contracts, in stock speculation, in the spouting of petroleum wells. Now, when each of these suddenly acknowledged children of wealth had built his grand house, furnished and pictured

it, so to speak, and had made his trip to Paris and seen something of the glory of the third Napoleon and Baron Haussmann, he had made up his mind to live luxuriously, and had to face the problem of ways and means. Luxury there was to be had, but it was such luxury as ministered to the quiet, conservative, and strictly private and esoteric pleasures of a limited and exclusive class. The new-made millionaire wanted something that showed for more in the shop-window. He found plenty of people to aid him in his search. The summer hotel sprang into existence to relieve him of all trouble for three months in the year. The Parisian *opéra bouffe* and the British burlesque came across the ocean to give a tone of sophisticated frivolity to the freshly formed society in which he found himself. He accustomed his palate to the taste of champagne. It was not long before his highest ethical aspirations were satisfied.

And here he was, holding high carnival in dazzled Northoak. He had brought his train with him. There were people from Keokuk and Peoria, people from Cynthiana, from Omaha, from San Francisco, from Petrolia, and from Des Moines. "Why, my dear," said one scandalized old lady of Northoak, "I really never supposed there *were* such places, except on the map, you know." There were gentlemen in velvet smoking-jackets, gentlemen in baggy knickerbockers, gentlemen with long blond whiskers, and gentlemen who affected smoking-caps. There were ladies in silks and ladies in satin, and a great many of them cul-

tivated a supposed resemblance to the Empress Eugénie, while still more were modelled upon the pattern of the "girl of the period." It was what was known as a "fast crowd," and about the most of its members there was nothing worse than the exuberant folly born of sudden luxury. They were gay birds of opulence, and they wanted to spread their wings and toss and tumble in the soft summer air. And if some birds of prey slipped in among them, who was to blame? The hotel-keepers of the day were not so wise in the matter of feathers as our experienced landlords of this present year of grace.

. . . . . .

On this August day of which I speak, the hotellites had some merrymaking afoot which awakened interest even among the people of the estates. Between the large contingent from the West and Southwest, and the minority from the Eastern and Middle States, there was a certain rivalry in all things, and each side had its leaders and champions. Two of these rivals (among the younger sets) were Jack Mowatt of New York, and Clayton Adriance of Kentucky. These young men danced equally well, they played about the same game of billiards, each was pastmaster at croquet, and each could

> "Urge toward the table's centre,
> With unerring hand, the squail."

(Squails and croquet! O gilded youth, shall aureate adolescence of 1910 smile thus at your tennis;

at your exceeding skill with a little foolish round puzzle which has amused you much of late?) In these accomplishments there was nothing to choose between them; but in the matter of horsemanship, it seemed, they were unwilling to divide honors.

Other young men there were, also, who challenged their supremacy. To-day, therefore, a race, a wonderful race of twenty miles, was to be run, in four-mile heats, on the track of the old county-fair grounds. It was an absurd contest—cruel on the country horses which had to be hired to supply four out of the five relays for each rider, and it was no fair test of the horsemanship of the two youths. Adriance was beyond doubt the more skilful and graceful horseman; but in a match like this he stood small chance against the superior wind and strength of his lithe, wiry, deep-chested antagonist, who had pulled in three college races, and who outclassed him in size and weight.

However, it was an opportunity for fun, for excitement, for showing of pretty gowns, betting of gloves and champagne and bon-bons and cigars. The hotellites turned out, one and all. Their landaulets and barouches and pony phaetons whirled pretty girls along the dusty highways, and all the primary colors flashed in the sun. Even the hill people came. A horse-race aroused every true American among them.

I trudged along the road, happy enough, yet longing for an invitation to ride beside the least of those pretty girls. I knew the hotel people, after a fashion; I was kindly permitted to hang on the

outer edge of their grandeur. Jack Mowatt, who was always good-hearted, now and then deigned to patronize me—I was only three years his junior. I even had a love-affair, if I am not mistaken, with the youngest daughter of a family of eight girls. She was waiting for her two elder sisters to marry, and she condescendingly practised upon me while she waited for her mother to bring her out. But none of my new friends bade me mount with them. It was the good old aristocracy that took pity on me. Tom Turner's dull, creaky voice hailed me:

"Hi, young man! going to the race?"

"Yes, sir."

"Jump in!"

Mr. Tom Turner never wasted words—his vocabulary did not allow of extravagance. I climbed into his "two-seater," and sat behind, talking to Mrs. Tom, who shared the front seat with her husband. She had to look over her shoulder as we conversed, and she paid my budding manhood the tribute of a shy blush. She called me "Mr.," too; and I was proud and happy as I sat there talking to her and studying her as only a hobbledehoy can study a young woman.

Every boy goes through this time of standing outside the world of grown women and studying them. A pretty face opens to him a very treasure-house of speculation, and even a plain girl is worth critical examination if the faintest nimbus of romance hang around her head—if it be possible to imagine her loved and loving.

Mrs. Tom was undeniably plain. Her features were sharp, and somewhat large. Her hair and eyes were *pale*—no other word suggests their faded, neutral dulness of tint. Her teeth were white and regular, but sharply prominent. She was well proportioned, yet her figure had the awkward lines of immaturity.

And yet there was nothing about her honest plainness to suggest that pitiless question: "Why did he marry her?" Any man might have married Mrs. Tom, for any one of a dozen good reasons, without even endangering his reputation for good taste. Mrs. Tom's face was kind, and it had a simple, youthful wholesomeness about it that must have been almost a positive charm, so pleasant does it seem to my memory after all these years. And she certainly had one positive charm, less subtle, yet less easy to tell of in fitting words. Cleanliness is an attribute that we predicate of all decent and lovable folk, yet there are persons whose cleanliness is offensive, and there are others whose cleanliness is so near to godliness as to be altogether lovable. Mrs. Tom carried with her an atmosphere of material as well as moral purity that absolutely radiated a sweet domesticity. Her fresh, soft skin was not brilliant; but it became her, it was characteristic; it was pleasant to the eye—part of a harmonious whole. For Mrs. Tom's soft gray and brown raiment helped to carry out the idea of her that you got from her face. On this day, I remember, she wore a gray gown with a lawn kerchief at her neck—not at all

in the fashion of the day, but quite in the eternal fashion of good taste and fitness.

We passed through the gates of the fair grounds and drove to a point on the back-stretch of the track, from which we could see the bright ribbon of blue that already hung between the judges' little signal-tower and the grand stand opposite. When I looked upon the grand stand I stifled another wish that the world of fashion might remember me. I had seen that bleak, roofless structure before, black with country-folk in their holiday attire; but oh, how changed was it to-day! A sea, a multicolored sea of parasols covered it, and the bright silken domes bobbed up and down over pretty heads in a way that seemed maddeningly vivacious and engaging to a half-grown boy whose lot was cast, for the hour, with eminent but uninteresting respectability. However, I was in for it where I was, and, having been early instructed in a long antiquated code of manners that forbade me to trample my elders under foot, I did my best to make myself agreeable to my hosts, and found some reward therein. It was something to know the names of all the riders, and to be able to display that proud knowledge.

"That's Jack Mowatt there, mounting the bay with a star. Adriance is the thin fellow with the chestnut. The little chap on the big gray horse is De Vere—I think he used to be on the stage. The man on the queer-looking buckskin—see! that yellowish one—is McAlpine. He plays billiards with his fingers. The other one—I think his name is

Ferguson—he's on his own horse; he's so rich he doesn't know what to do with his money, and he's got three horses here; he only had to hire two. But he can't ride much. It's between Mowatt and Adriance."

"And which is your man?" inquired Mrs. Tom, smiling.

"Mowatt, of course. New York against Kentucky."

"Then he's mine," said Mrs. Tom.

As she spoke the bell rang, the horses started forward, made a bad start, and went back. Then came another bad start, and then they got off, on the worst start of all three, with Mowatt in the lead, and Adriance badly pocketed by De Vere and McAlpine. Jack pushed his horse and rode like a madman. He was a dozen lengths ahead when he passed us.

"Ah!" growled Tom Turner, in disgust: "fool—he'll never last!"

Even to my eyes Jack was riding foolishly. He had a great, heavy-built colt, strong and willing; but the cheers, the yelling, and, above all, the brutal pace, frightened the poor beast, and on the third lap, when he led by nearly a mile, he began to go wild.

"Bolt, sure!" said Tom, as he saw the leader come into the back-stretch.

And bolt he did, heading straight for us. We stood close to the track, with no rail to separate us. Turner stood nearest the course; I was next, with Mrs. Tom just behind me. She was nerv-

ously twisting her handkerchief in both hands; for she had taken her side already, and she was as well able to judge of the chances as any man on the ground.

Then came as quick a bit of work as I ever saw. The big horse left the track, stumbled on the turf, and came down on his knees, Jack Mowatt going over his head. Turner had the animal by the bridle and brought him to his feet in a second, quivering and panting, but unhurt save for a scratch or two. Jack, who had landed lightly, was up again as soon as his horse. In an instant his foot was in the stirrup and his hand on the crupper, and then he stopped. The blood from a sharp cut on his forehead was trickling into his eyes. He dashed it out with his left hand, and then, just as a look of despair came over his face, Mrs. Tom stepped up and tied her white handkerchief around his head, tight and firm. Her face was pale, but her hands were steady, and the blinding flow was stopped before any one except Jack knew what she was doing.

He knew. His eyes lighted up; he bent, caught one of her hands in his free hand, kissed it, and swung himself into the saddle. I saw Mrs. Tom's white face flush a burning red, and then I turned to see Jack take the track again, just as the field thundered by us, Adriance far ahead, leading by many lengths.

I am not going to tell the story of that race. It was a cruel affair, as far as it went, for they ran only three heats. Mowatt won. He took his own

horse for the next relay, and nearly ruined a splendid animal in four miles of mad riding. But he passed the field as if they stood still, and he rode Adriance down after a long and brutal struggle. At the end of the third heat, when he led the Kentucky boy by a quarter of a mile, and the poor youngster looked as though he were about to fall off his horse, the judges stopped the race. All the other riders had dropped off except the despised Ferguson, who was sticking to it a mile or so in the rear. Three horses had been spoiled for life, and the "sporting blood" of the judges had had all it could endure.

Adriance was badly shaken up. He was out of training and incapable of sustained exertion. He shook Mowatt's hand and tried to smile as he said:

"My only regret is that you weren't born in Kentucky."

The Grand Stand went wild, of course, and made the most of its two heroes, and even of Ferguson, who had shown an unexpected pluck. Jack Mowatt was the hero of the hour, and the women fairly flung themselves at his feet. If it had not been Jack's lot in life to bask in women's smiles, his head might have been turned. But Jack had flirted from his cradle up, and to have a hundred women worshipping him instead of one was an experience differing only in degree, and not in kind, from many which he had enjoyed in the brief course of his youth.

He smiled on his admirers for a few minutes,

and then made for the stable. Half-way there, as if a sudden thought had come to him, he turned and came up the course to our group on the back-stretch. Mrs. Tom flushed red once more as she saw him, and there was still a touch of color in her face when I proudly introduced the hero, and he began to express his gratitude in Jack's own demonstrative way. He said no more than he meant, perhaps; but he said a great deal more than was necessary, and a great deal more, I have no doubt, than he thought he was saying. Mrs. Tom heard him for the most part in silence. When she said anything, it was with a fluttered, nervous brightness that was wholly unlike her natural manner. Yet it was a manner natural enough under the circumstances. Nine women out of ten would have talked in just that tone. There was nothing odd about the tone, except that it was Mrs. Tom who used it.

Mowatt could not stay long; the cut on his head needed dressing, and the local doctor was already beckoning him toward the stables. But before he bade farewell to Mrs. Tom, I could not help hearing a characteristic speech which he made. Turner and I were tightening buckles on the harness, and Mowatt had his back to me as he said:

"I'll send your handkerchief back to-morrow, Mrs. Turner. I wish—I wish I might keep it, as a memento—of the race. But I suppose——"

I did not hear what Mrs. Tom said in reply. But as we drove home I learned that Tom had agreed to take her to the "hop" at the hotel that

evening; and all the way that I went with them Mrs. Tom looked back to talk to me in that same softly fluttered way, asking questions and running on without waiting for answers. I noticed that the flush was still on her cheeks.

"I've never been to a hop at the hotel," she said. "I suppose it's quite festive beside our dull doings here. I haven't an idea what to wear. What do the ladies generally wear? Oh, but there! what do you know about such things? You don't notice ladies' dresses, do you? Men never do. But it must be lovely to dance to that splendid band! Do you dance? If you do, you mustn't forget your country friends—" and so on, while Tom drove stolidly along, and I watched this poor little gray pigeon preen her wings—watched her with all a boy's cruel but observant interest.

And here, as the conversation which I had overheard a few minutes before was the beginning of a bad business, for which Jack Mowatt has been often blamed, let me say a word for that unlucky butterfly. I knew him well in after years, and knew him for a perfectly harmless and highly ornamental insect. Flirting was as much a part of his daily existence as eating, drinking, or sleeping—if you can call that flirtation which was merely the exchange of the most obvious flattery and innocently exaggerated deference for that delightfully familiar sort of petting which women are always ready to lavish on the man who is not to be taken seriously. And only two women that

I have heard of ever took Jack seriously. One was Mrs. Tom—the other was the girl who finally married him. And it was characteristic of this graceful and voluble woman-worshipper, that, when his time came, and he was really in love, he lost his tongue and his wits, and had to be dragged through his courtship and up to the speaking-point like any country oaf.

So I think I may fairly say that when Jack kissed Mrs. Tom's hand and begged her handkerchief, he did no more than he would have done had it been his own grandmother, and meant no more ill. It was Jack's way of being decently and respectfully civil to a woman.

It was late that night when I laid aside my books and hurried eagerly over to the hotel. The distant music had twisted up my trigonometry for three hours, and the figures of the lanciers and the quadrille had wellnigh driven another sort of figures out of my young head. However, young conscience was somehow satisfied when I entered the great dining-room, turned into a ball-room by the presence of two fiddlers and a double bass and a clarinet, supporting the lean hotel "accompanist" in the piano-corner. Yet I had not been three minutes in that scene of revelry before I wished that I had not left my shabby calf-covered books, my little white-cloth-topped table, my poor kerosene lamp, whereon the moths and mosquitoes stuck fast in the oil, looking like Christian martyrs after the festival of human torches.

Tom Turner was the first person I met. He was leaving the ball-room, headed for the billiard-room. He only nodded when he saw me.

"Where is Mrs. Turner?" I asked.

"In there," he said, and went on his way. He was always taciturn, impassive, chary of his words; but he spoke with such a sullen shortness that—boy-like—I fancied I had done something to offend him.

I went "in there." It was a little parlor or drawing-room opening from the large hall. There sat Jack Mowatt on a yellow and blue satin divan—a hideous round structure, such as you still may see in the abodes of the aristocracy, on our realistic modern stage. He was doing the wounded hero to perfection, his manly beauty not wholly marred by a narrow strip of sticking-plaster running half-way across his forehead. In front of him half a dozen women had drawn up their chairs to form a circle of worship. There were four young girls not yet out of the age of gigglehood, a black-browed, aquiline-nosed handsome bird of prey from San Francisco, and Mrs. Tom.

Mrs. Tom in a white silk dress, with a girlish pink sash, and with the pinkest of pink roses in her poor colorless hair; Mrs. Tom talking loud and fast, and talking nonsense—that is what Mrs. Tom's young friend heard and saw as he stood stupefied in the doorway of the room with the yellow and blue satin divan.

"So like the knights and cavaliers of old!" this young man heard her say. "Didn't you feel like a knight, Mr. Mowatt?"

"Didn't Mr. Mowatt *act* like a knight?" queried the Bird of Prey, dryly, and the four girls giggled.

"I should have been a poor knight without my rescuing lady," said Jack, and the girls giggled again. Mrs. Tom heard them not.

"Mr. Mowatt was the knightliest of knights," she said, laughing shrilly. Her eyes shone; there was a hot color in her high cheek-bones.

I withdrew softly; no one had noticed my presence. They were all too intent on drawing out poor Mrs. Tom—all except Jack, who was frowning furtively at the beauty with the aquiline nose.

I was chagrined and humiliated. The reckless jollity, the crude luxury of the hotel life had attracted me; but my friends were the good, quiet gentlefolk on the hills, and to see one of them made the dupe and the butt of these half-breed savages wounded my juvenile loyalty. I slipped out of the ball-room, and I thought that the whole pleasure of the evening was lost for me, until I stumbled across my own immature charmer, the youngest of the eight, sulking in a dark corner of the veranda, where she could look in at the gayety which she might not share with her seven elders.

She confided to me that she considered her exclusion "real mean"—she said "reel"—and I sat down by her side and consoled her in the soft summer night. By and by I forgot Mrs. Tom (and

myself, wellnigh), and I received a painful shock when Maude Addie said:

"They're dancing the Caledonian quadrille! Who *is* that queer creature dancing all out of time?"

I knew before I looked in the window. It was Mrs. Tom and Jack Mowatt was her partner. She was dancing furiously, awkwardly, and quite out of time. Some of the younger girls were imitating her angular movements to her very face; but she danced on, smiling, radiant, unconscious of everything but the strange elation that had taken possession of her. By the end the dance had degenerated almost to a romp; but Mrs. Tom smiled on, gayly, triumphantly. A minute later she passed us on Jack's arm.

"Upon my word, Mrs. Turner," I heard him say, "there's no one I ever knew who could dance like you."

"Oh, you flatterer!" said the poor woman, looking up at him with blind gratitude in her face.

. . . . . .

The next morning Mrs. Tom, driving down to the village, as was her custom, stopped at the hotel to see the Bird of Prey, or some other of her new friends, and incidentally carried Jack off for a drive. The day after, Turner went fishing, and Mrs. Tom passed most of the day with the hotellites. The third day it was much the same; on the fourth, I was invited to dinner at the Brinckerhoffs, who were Turner's first-cousins, and after

dinner old Mrs. Brinckerhoff took me aside and asked me plumply if it was true that Tom's wife was associating so freely with "those people." I tried to fib, but the occasion was not happy for mendacity.

However, it mattered little. Mrs. Tom's infatuation for her new society was beyond all concealing, and the nature of it was clear enough. She was fighting for her woman's birthright of admiration, romance, and worship. For the first time it had come into her head that she might be as these other women—courted, petted, pelted with rose-leaf flatteries; that she, too, might have her adorers; might drink the champagne of this sparkling, glorious life. A week before she had been contented, in her wholesome dulness, with the husband whom she had married as a matter of course, who loved her (as she loved him) yet had never made love to her. She had been contented when the glass told her that her face was plain: the thought troubled her no more than the thought that she could not read Greek. She could have honestly admired a beautiful woman, just as she might have respected a Greek scholar. She had never longed for beauty: it went for little in her world—for less than fair birth or breeding, and both of these she had. It was natural enough that she should have been contented. Do you envy the splendid colonel whom you admire as he rides at the head of his regiment? Do you want his uniform to go about your business in? Do you want his mettlesome great horse, that you couldn't ride

to save your life? Do you want even his glory, bought at the cost of wounds and cares and privations? Not for an instant. Envy of *him* will never keep you awake o' nights. But join his regiment as the rawest of privates, and you will envy every rag of gold lace on that man's body. So it was with Mrs. Tom. A man had kissed her hand, and she longed for beauty.

Beauty itself she must have known was beyond her reach. But that she could be in the ranks of beauty, be one of the women who charm and are courted, breathe the delicious incense of men's adoration—this had been revealed to her by proof indubitable. Had not the very paragon of women-worshippers kissed her hand? Was he not wearing her handkerchief in his waistcoat? Cinderella had come to the court of the king!

It was a mad fancy of Mrs. Tom's, but it was born, perhaps, of vague, half-formulated, half-repressed dreams that none of those about her knew of, and it was fostered by a most malicious combination of circumstances. Jack began his innocent blandishments in good faith; then he passed, all unsuspicious, to a dangerous jest; then he found the jest broadening under the smiles of the spectators, and sought a way out of it by turning it into palpable burlesque—palpable, he found, to all save the woman whose head he had turned —a woman who had no sense of humor, and who had never heard of the possibility of raillery so cruel and unchivalrous. And then, foreseeing in himself a red-handed butcher of courtesy and deli-

cacy, he lost his head and took to his heels. He was much to be condemned—he was condemned—but this is to be said for him, that he began in good faith and went wrong before he knew it; and that the management of a maniac, when that maniac is a woman insane on the subject of her own charms, is a problem that might prove too much for many an older man of the world than this poor flibbertigibbet of twenty-one.

His solution of the problem was simple. On Friday he went to New York—on business, he said. He was to be back by Saturday evening. Calypso waited for him Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. On Tuesday she saw his trunks go out of the hotel, marked for New York. A letter to one of his friends among the men conveyed the intelligence that he was called away by the illness of a relative.

It turned out to be no solution at all. He dealt his victim a cruel blow, but did not awaken her from her dream. In that one week Mrs. Tom had heard more about flirtations and jiltings and transfers of affection generally than she had heard in all her previous life. She had even met one ingenuous Southern maid who was habitually engaged to three gentlemen at once. She accepted this as her first defeat in a world which she had already learned was a world of secret but unceasing strife. She smothered her humiliation, and determined to go on with the fight.

She had no difficulty in carrying on her campaign. She was a rich joke for the hotel, in more

senses than one. The harpy contingent had already discovered that she was well-to-do in her own right. They set their young men to "taking turns at Mrs. Tom," and keeping her supplied with all the flattering attentions which she would accept. And, by the irony of fate, she found a genuine adorer. He was a sulky, loutish youth, who had been brought up on a farm until he came into the fortune of an oil-well uncle. This silent, dull youngster, half a dozen years her junior, fell honestly in love with her, and trailed about after her like an ill-conditioned poodle.

A lively chase Mrs. Tom led him. The end of that second week found her in the forefront of all the hotel gayety. She slept at home; but her days and her evenings were passed with her hotellites, who diverted themselves without ceasing. That week a flash, fashionable dressmaker and milliner came up from New York, and Mrs. Tom gave orders for dresses that made the eyes shine in the scheming heads of the birds of prey. The dresses were confected with great rapidity under their directions, and such marvels of gorgeous bad taste were they that, even in that day of loud things, they scandalized the most advanced thought of the hotel. Mrs. Tom, clean out of her modest depth in color, fairly floundered in reds and greens and blues and yellows; and let me remind you that we had had no Morris in those days, no Burne-Jones to tell us of the sin of primary colors, or to teach us the holiness of sage-green and the sacredness of old gold and the ter-

ra-cotta family. Mrs. Tom made ample return for these aids to fashionable elegance. She lent money to ladies expecting remittances, and showed unwearying patience in awaiting the remittances; she guaranteed their credit at the dressmaker's; she gave them costly presents; and she paid her scot on all the excursions and picnic parties: festivities which were not conducted on a modest scale. One of them won some fame at the time. Ferguson, the millionaire contractor, took a driving-party of twenty to the Mountain House, a sporting resort some ten miles away, up in the hills; and when they sat down to supper (cooked by a New York *chef,* served by New York waiters) each lady found her napkin rolled up in a gold bracelet set with diamonds, by way of a napkin-ring—a dainty conceit of the millionaire's. It was at this supper, I believe, that they induced Mrs. Tom to sing "dites-lui," and found great sport therein.

But what, you ask, were Mrs. Tom's relatives doing all this while? They were doing just about what relatives and friends usually do under comparable circumstances, and to just about as much purpose. "If any of *my* people," we have all said, at one time or another, "were to attempt to disgrace the family, *I* should do——" this, that, or the other. But, when the time comes, we all of us find that we have very little influence in the matter, and that a wilful whippersnapper of eighteen, even, can peg stones at the family escutcheon at his or her sweet will. How about

your niece? Didn't she run away and join the comic-opera company, as she said she would? How about my cousin? Didn't he marry her, as he said he would? You and I are connections by marriage, and we wouldn't be if we could have helped it.

And what was Tom Turner doing? For the first three weeks everybody asked that question. By the fourth week everybody knew that he was drinking hard. He found himself in a situation that was to him as incomprehensibly unreal as a nightmare. His orderly, narrow life afforded no precedent to guide him. He knew that everything was wrong. He knew not how to set it right. He remonstrated, he quarrelled with her; then he relapsed into sullen silence, went fishing day after day, and drank more than was good for him.

I have no doubt that his meagre vocabulary put him at a disadvantage. He could tell his wife that she was "carrying on," perhaps that she was "making a fool of herself;" but beyond this he probably found himself unable to characterize her conduct without saying that it was "not respectable." And with men of Tom's class this phrase had a specific meaning which would have made its use impossible. Tom could not insult his wife with the thought. Indeed, through all the time of her folly, no one ever dreamed of thinking it anything worse than folly, pure and simple. Even the hotel harpies knew better than to misconstrue her silliness. The most cynical and reckless of

the velveteen-coated adventurers would not have dared to enlighten Mrs. Tom's ignorance; for whatever black depths there might be in the world where she moved, they were carefully screened from her eyes, and to the end she believed that the "flirtations" of those about her were as innocent as her own.

As to Tom, she told him he was prejudiced, unkind, and selfish. She was doing no harm, she was spending her own money, she was having a good time. If he did not like her friends, well and good. And so Tom went off to his fish and his bottle, and Mrs. Tom went on making herself the laughing-stock of the hotel and the horror of her family. The people on the hills wept over her, and the children at the hotel invented a pretty pastime which they called "making believe be Mrs. Tom."

. . . . . .

One morning in the first week of September I stood on the steps of the hotel gazing at Mr. Ferguson's new span of horses, when I heard a rustle of silks by my side, a hand was laid lightly on my shoulder, and a high-pitched voice, which I knew in spite of its affected, drawling tone, said:

"Why, *de-ar* boy! I haven't seen you in an age!"

It was Mrs. Tom, or what passed for Mrs. Tom in these days, though it was not easy to recognize her at a glance, in her glaring red and green shot-silk, with rouge and powder making a hectic il-

lumination on her high-boned cheeks, with her eyebrows blackened, her hair dyed a strange shiny yellow, and with diamonds stuck and hung all over her—at ten o'clock in the morning.

"I must get Ferguson," she said, "to let me take you out behind these grays. You shall handle the ribbons, and you shall smoke, too, if you like. Why don't you let us see something of you? We" (she dwelt on the pronoun as though it were sweet in her mouth) "would like to have you. And if you want to have a good time, you know, you've got to come with *us*. And there's just the chance for you, dear boy! Young Mason, who's been making himself so sweet to Mrs. Gilderoy—his mother's just taken him away. She was afraid!" (Mrs. Tom tittered.) "Now's your chance. Do you know Mrs. Gilderoy? No? She's from New Orleans. The *loveliest* woman! Yes, you positively must come to the front."

I stumbled out some confused acknowledgment. I felt all the shame that she should have felt. She saw my blush, and smiled complacently as she moved away. She took it for the tribute of bashfulness.

I watched her as she walked along the veranda. She was trying to imitate a carriage that had a brief vogue at that time—the body was thrown forward of the hips, involving a general distortion of various anatomical processes.

She sat down among her friends, who were scarcely less besilked and bejewelled than she. I looked back to the street, and saw Tom Turner's

road-wagon turning in from the Highkill Falls road.

It was a sight common enough of late. Turner often spent the night at Highkill, where there was a sportsmen's tavern, and his man drove over for him in the morning. But to-day Turner was not in the wagon. His man was driving alone, and he drove straight for the hotel, peering under the veranda as he came until his eye fell on his mistress. He alighted, went up to her, gave her a note, and marched back to his wagon.

Mrs. Tom read the letter, gave a husky little cry, turned paler than her powder, and straightened out rigid, as though she were in an epileptic fit. The group of women closed in about her. I hurried toward them, but, before I came near, Mrs. Tom had recovered herself, at least enough to walk with a woman on each side of her, and they took her to the nearest room. She passed within a yard of me, and the frightened, stricken stare of the eyes that looked out from that painted face was like a vision of death and judgment.

I need hardly say that in her few moments of unconsciousness somebody in the crowd read her letter. I heard its contents discussed in the open street. It was from Tom, and said that he had gone away, and that she should not see him again. It was a drunken man's letter; but, drunk or sober, Tom never failed of his word.

. . . . . .

The next day a delegation of the harpies, who had no notion to let their prey slip away so easily, drove up to call on poor dear Mrs. Turner. They were refused admittance at the gates. The three children were dangerously ill, the lodge-keeper said, and Mrs. Turner would see no one.

It was believed for a time that the sickness of the children was a mere excuse for retirement; but the next day the local doctor hailed me from his gig, and gave me some news. He was a testy, kindly, vehement conservative, this little gray old doctor.

"Your people have gone home, haven't they?" he asked.

"Yes, sir—last week. I've got to stay and finish my grind. It's a beast."

"Well, you'd best get out, too. There's something like an epidemic in town. The three Turner children are down. I think they'll come out all right—mother's with 'em now, nursing 'em day and night—but it's hard to tell. Dysentery—that's all—but I've had seven other cases within thirty-six hours, and there are one or two I don't like the looks of. Don't believe in scares—but you know what the papers say. Cholera on the other side—had a genuine case in New York yesterday. Just about time we had another turn of it in this country. And if it does come, young man, this is the sort of place that's just ripe for it. Five hundred new people here since June—not a drain—not a damn drain—beg your pardon, sir! It's manslaughter—rank manslaughter! And if

it gets into that devil's toy-shop there''—he pointed to the hotel—''it will have everything its own way—close the cussèd place, I hope. *Clk!* Kitty, git up! Don't you stay here, my boy; don't you stay here! *Clk!''*

Being a boy, of course I did not go. The prospect of beholding a pestilence was far too alluring.

The doctor was right. Bad drainage—or, rather, no drainage at all—and a summer of uninterrupted heat had worked together to produce a local epidemic of a serious nature. It was on a Monday that this conversation was held; on Tuesday a half dozen cases appeared at the hotel, and then this little army of frivolity, a host of weak creatures with nothing to tie up to in this world or the next, were smitten with utter, shameless panic. Those of them who could go at once went. Before Wednesday night one hundred and twenty-seven people had left the hotel. More than that number remained against their will, held by one cause or another—in most cases, impecuniosity. There were many fair ladies in that caravansary who were in the habit of depositing their diamonds in the hotel-safe at night, not because they were in fear of thieves, but because the proprietor particularly requested it. Various gentlemen, moreover, were chained, as it were, to the bar-room slate and the account-book of the billiard-room keeper. There was much telegraphing for remittances, and the faro-bank did a rushing busi-

ness twenty-four hours in the day, and would willingly have kept open twenty-five hours, had it been possible.

Saturday ended this carnival of fear, for the great hotel closed. Nearly sixscore people, sick and well, left the great barracks staring at the dull fall day out of its hundreds of blindless windows, marched down the long street, and piled in confusion into the two stuffy little cars that made up a train on the shaky little railroad that ran from Northoak to the Hudson River. The more decent of the lot somehow settled in the rearward car; in that behind the engine, the wilder spirits got together, and to watch these I slipped in and seated myself on the wood-box.

That was a hideous journey. Fear—the most abject, dastardly, selfish fear possessed this crowd that was so brazen three days before; and, after the manner of their kind, they tried to hide it with bravado. Some had bottles of champagne, all had whiskey or brandy, and as time went on they drank themselves half-wild. They sang, they shouted, they made mad and brutal jokes. The restrictions of decency and even of discretion were forgotten. Strange relationships stood out in undisguised frankness, and the ugliest part of all their ugliness was the open selfishness that showed how frail was the tie that knit one human being to another. And among them all not one spoke the word that summed up all their terrors. They spoke of "it," and that "it" meant the

Cholera. Typhus and malaria were waiting for many of them; but of these dangers, which had obviously menaced them through all their sojourn at that drainless barrack, they thought nothing. It was a baseless terror, an all but impossible possibility, that struck terror to their weak souls.

Save myself, there were but two silent passengers in the car. Directly opposite me sat the bird of prey, Mrs. Gilderoy of New Orleans. Sheer fright had prostrated her, and had brought back an old trouble, quiescent for years. She had been taken with hemorrhage of the lungs. She had telegraphed to New York, to a certain Sister of Charity. "She will come," the scared wretch said; and she had come, and now was taking this pallid shadow of a woman back to New York, to die within the white walls of a hospital, no longer a person, an agent for good or ill in the breathing world—a number, in a numbered cot, for which some other wretch waits, to be a number in her turn. Looking at the faces of these two women, as they sat side by side, you saw that they were sisters in another sense than that of Christian charity. But peace was in one face and deadly fear in the other.

Just as we drew into our station on the Hudson, a woman fainted, and an access of fright set the whole carload of men and women struggling for the doors. That was the last I saw of them. They took the railroad; I crossed the river in a row-boat and went down to New York in a freight-

barge, which is the ideal way of travelling, if there are no calves aboard.

. . . . . .

It was ten years before I saw Northoak again, and it was only an idle impulse that took me there. I had three or four last days at the end of a vacation in the mountains. My party had disbanded; no one expected me in New York before the next Monday. It came into my head to stop at Northoak on my way back, to whip the trout-streams after my own fashion—a luxury I cannot indulge in when there are professional-amateur anglers to wither me with their scorn. Yes, I take a book in my pocket, and, if the trout will not have me, I lie down under a tree and walk the London streets with Mr. Samuel Pepys, monstrous fine in his waistcoat made of his wife's brocade petticoat, or stroll under the Italian skies with Eichendorff's Good-for-nothing in his mystic, magical *Wanderjahre.* Northoak trout were too small game for the gentry, who despise this sort of fishing; yet there be trout at Northoak, so there I went. I had other reasons, of course—a foolish fancy of reminiscence leading me back to look for boyhood in boyhood's paths.

I found my old abiding-place, still a refuge for the stranger, but now only as a lodging-house for those who "mealed" at the hotel. It was kept by a brisk woman of business, fresh from New England, who could tell me nothing of my old friends. I asked for the room that had been mine; but when

I saw it, and found how close and small it was (and always must have been), I gladly took a larger chamber on the floor below.

I went to dinner at the hotel. There it was, the same hotel, but, oh! how changed from that hotel I had known. All the smartness of it had vanished. The wood-work was warped; the paint, of a later era of bad taste, was dull and weather-worn; the frescoed ceiling of the great dining-room had fallen in a dozen places, and the damages had been repaired with white plaster. The yellow and blue satin furniture was gone. Strange, angular furniture had taken its place. I was told that it was in the Eastlake style. The house was full—filled with quiet, decorous families from Boston and Philadelphia, with a small mingling of highly respectable, hard-working artists. I don't think there was a bottle of champagne in the place. I know that there was a sewing-circle in the rooms where the faro-bank used to be, and a candy-shop in the place of the saloon.

Not a trace left of the old life—the old silly, reckless, dangerous, hopeful, happy life. Everything is better now, wiser, more wholesome. And yet we were happy in those days when the "Blue Danube" was new; when we first beheld *le sabre de mon père;* when our veins thrilled with the potentiality of pleasures that we have grown tired of since—in those crude days when things were fresher than they are now. And this much I am sure of: we who left our boyhood behind us a

score of years ago were a deal merrier, more companionable, juicier fellows than the finished youths of to-day, who take their pleasures so sadly, who know such a weary, worrysome lot about what is good form and what isn't, and who treat women just as they treat men.

On the morning after my arrival I sat in my room writing letters. Looking up and out the window, I saw a dog-cart going along the street. In it sat a gray-haired woman, bolt upright, dressed in a gown of yellow and black, so strange in fashion, as well as in color, that it might have been the caprice of a madwoman. I saw her—and she was gone. But I knew Mrs. Tom.

I had a feeling of something like dizziness as I tried to realize that I had actually seen this thing, and not dreamed it. I had seen Mrs. Tom, gray-haired and pale, dressed in the clothes I had seen her in a decade before. What was she now? A ghostly maniac, revisiting the scenes of her mad happiness?

I thought about it until I could write letters no longer, and set out for a walk. I had hardly crossed the threshold of the house when a voice cried:

"Hello!"

I stopped, and a man grasped my hand.

"Knew you right off!" he said. "Glad to see you. Changed, haven't you? Stopping here, eh? No! Won't do! Come up to my house. Mrs. Turner glad to see you. After trout? Show you lots. Mustn't stay here—won't have it! Come

for you at three. Get your traps ready. Bless you—knew you right off—didn't I?"

I had been only a boy when he knew me for a summer or two, but when he bade me good-by, after making me promise to visit him, he walked off, smiling, as though he had met his best friend. He was changed, too. His hair was grizzled, and when he was not speaking his eyes had a half-vacant, half-sleepy look that had not belonged to his youthful stolidity.

At three he came for me, and I had to go, much as I dreaded meeting Mrs. Tom. He was cheerful as we drove along, but as taciturn as of old. If he spoke, it was to say something about the weather or the crops, or the cattle in the fields which we passed. Mrs. Turner was well, he said, and the children. They had had another one since I had seen them—a splendid boy, four years old now. A fine growing summer! They would have the finest crop of hay ever gathered in the county—didn't I think so?

We found Mrs. Tom in the great drawing-room that opened on the lawn, and my heart sank within me as I saw that she was dressed in a gown of faded pink, almost as startlingly out of fashion as the odd garment she had worn in the morning. But though she blushed a little as she greeted me (and her blush, against her soft gray hair, made her look almost pretty), she showed no embarrassment, no strangeness of manner, and in a moment I felt quite at ease, not only for myself but for her. At the first look, I fancied that her pale

face seemed stern; at the second, I saw in it such a sweet dignity that I wondered why I had ever thought of the clothes she had on.

After a while the children came in, and presently Turner took them off to see if the new Jersey cow had arrived. The three elder were attractive children. The two girls were perhaps fifteen and sixteen, well mannered, and pretty, or comely at least. The boy was a fine fellow of thirteen, with a manly way about him. The youngest was of a different sort. I thought him dull and heavy, and he had the pettish bearing of a spoiled child. But I saw that this Benjamin was as the apple of his mother's eye. There was a difference not only of degree but of kind in the look which she cast after him as her eyes followed her children out of the room.

They had hardly gone when she looked up at me with a tremulous eagerness and said:

"You didn't want to come? No, I understand. But I wanted to tell you that I'm glad to have you here. Of course, I wanted you to come because it pleased *him;* but I'm glad to see you, anyway—for myself, don't you know."

I said that I had hoped she would care to see me; but she paid no attention to my awkward commonplaces, and went on:

"I thought you'd feel that I wouldn't want to see you, on account of—that time, you know—my spree. Oh, yes, I know. That's what they called it. I know a good deal now that I didn't know then. I know just how—just how I seemed to

people. That's why I don't mind seeing *you.* It wasn't quite the same with you. You never had anything to do with making me behave—as I did."

She snatched up a little dress from the work-basket by her side, stretched it out and shaped it upon her lap, threaded a needle with that mechanical deftness which belongs to women, and began sewing and talking at once.

"I don't believe you ever made fun of me. *They* all did. I've often thought since, thinking how those men pretended to make love to me, that you were always *respectful*—don't you understand me? It made me feel, when I used to think about it, that I was *worth* it—you know what I mean? I've ground my teeth sometimes just for pain, and then I've thought how nice you were to me, and I've felt better."

Great God! I thought to myself, can the chance of a boy's decent breeding mean so much to his fellow-beings?

"I didn't mean to talk about that time," she began again after she had stitched for a minute in silence. "I only meant to tell you something so that you would understand how it is now. I don't know whether you heard much about what happened afterwards."

"I heard something," I said; "you went West."

"Not till the next summer. We tried all we could, but we didn't find out where he was till then. And Ethel wasn't really strong until June.

Then I heard where he was, and I went out and found him in Omaha."

She paused again, and kept her head down close over her work.

"He wouldn't even see me. He wouldn't let me come near him. He was drinking, you know. I don't mean that I blame him"—she raised her head and looked me in the eye, feeling herself the champion of her husband—"he never would have done it if it hadn't been for me—and he wasn't himself." She dropped her head again. "Then he had the delirium, and I could come and nurse him, and then came the brain fever, and after that he woke up one morning just as clear as ever—just like his own self—and he's been so ever since. That's when we came home; and, oh, it seemed to me that I could just get down and kiss the ground!"

She held her work at arm's length and winked at it until she could see it clearly.

"I don't know that I should say just his old self," she began again; "he's never been the same, exactly. You know he used to be quite bright."

I never had known it—but I said I had.

"Well, I think he's getting clearer all the time. He knew you at once, didn't he?"

"He spoke to me first," I hastened to say, "before I recognized him."

"Yes, he came home and told me. He was very proud of it. That's one reason why I was so glad you came. *He* knows it, you know, and it's such a gain when he feels sure of himself."

I nursed my vanity for a while. Then Mrs. Tom began once more, looking straight at me, though her cheeks were flushed.

"Of course you've noticed——" Her eyes dropped, and she looked at her dress as though she would have me look at it. "I'm wearing them out."

I suppose my eyes were blankly inquisitive.

"They're the things I had *then*. I'm wearing them out. It's a part of my penance. I don't mean in a Roman Catholic way, you know," she interpolated, with a look of shocked affright in her eyes; "I don't mean anything of that sort, of course, but only—oh, you can't get away from what you've done. And you wouldn't believe it, but in that one month that I was—on my spree—I had nineteen dresses made, and had eleven more ordered, just to have more than anybody else in that horrid place. And then there were fourteen that I had ordered from Paris. They came home at Christmas, just the day before. That was my only Christmas present that year—and hadn't I bought it myself? Oh, I knew *that* then!"

She had dropped her work and had folded her hands in her lap.

"I don't know that I can make you understand why I wear those things," she said. "It's like having a whip on my back, sometimes, to get them on. I don't know why I'm talking to you like this, anyway, except that I never *have* talked to any one. But, don't you see, the children are

growing up, and they'll know all about it. Oh, I've told them—the older ones—but they don't understand. It doesn't mean anything to them. They can't think their mother ever did anything wrong. It's like talking of original sin to them. But you know they'll be out in the world—that is, our world here—in a little while, and then it will all be told to them, and you know *how* it will be told—you know just how they'll have to hear it. And it's always seemed to me that if they saw me in those clothes they'd understand it—that they wouldn't be so far away from it—that they'd feel they knew about it, and it was something that had come naturally to them; and they could forgive it, and say, 'Poor mother, we don't mind *that!*' And they're so used to me—so used to these things—I think they will. Don't you understand?"

The setting sun made the white walls pink. I watched the warm light spreading. I had looked once in Mrs. Tom's eyes, and I had nothing to say. But soon she spoke again, in a cheerful, hopeful voice.

"I've worn them all almost out. When I get to the end of them, I'll have my own things again."

By and by the children came in once more. The new cow had arrived, and papa was waiting for mamma in the lower pasture. We went down, and joined with Tom in praising the beautiful Jersey. I noticed that at every word of critical praise he uttered he appealed to his wife, and

that she confirmed his judgment in a tone that was almost maternal. Even so might a mother assent to her boy's simple guesses at the use and meaning of the things about him.

As we left the pasture Tom took his wife's hand to direct her attention to something in the economy of the farm about which he asked her advice. We went up the hill in the twilight, and I lingered behind with the children, and saw that he still kept hold of the tips of her fingers, as they walked up the hill together.

. . . . . .

Mrs. Tom is dead, or this tale would not be told. But it is only a few years ago that she died, and I think that she had time enough on earth to wear out those cruel clothes, and to sit a while with her husband and her children, clad in such a soft gray gown as I saw her wear once upon a time, with a white handkerchief folded over a peaceful breast.

SQUIRE FIVE-FATHOM

THERE had been a heavy rain the night before, and I was playing with sand and water in the deep trench between the road and the lower wall of my father's garden, and enjoying it as much as a boy of eight years can enjoy anything without the company of other boys. A swift stream of clear water rushed down this sandy gutter, and made for me a far-western river, on whose bank I was constructing a fort to defy the hostile Indians. I had selected a grassy promontory jutting out into the stream, and had pulled all the grass out by the roots and levelled the earth, and was beginning on my fortifications, when I observed with alarm the dissolution of the point of my site, which, no longer held together by the fibrous grass roots, was rapidly turning into black mud and going down the current in a cloud.

I tried to stem the flood with a flat stone set on end; but it would not stay on end, and I was contemplating the necessity of a change of base for my military operations, when the tip of a thick walking-stick was thrust between my face and the water, and I heard a tremulous, eager old voice cry earnestly:

"Further up—further up, my lad; there—

there where you have it now—set off the current ever so little. Ay, that's it! Now build your sea-wall—good boy!"

I obeyed him mechanically, and in a few seconds saw the stream swirl off from my point, leaving it in a safe space of calm water. The Indians on the other shore must have felt gloomy forebodings.

I looked up. A tall, gaunt old gentleman, with a Roman nose, and a delicate mouth with deep wrinkles about it, as though he drew his lips together a good deal, stood and looked hard at the water. He did not look at me at all; but I looked hard at him—at his sad old face, his shabby brown broadcloth coat, the great rusty black satin stock about his neck, and his napless beaver hat with its rolling brim.

He stared at the water for a moment or two, gave an odd sort of half-choked sigh, and passed on his way.

That was the first time Squire Five-Fathom spoke to me.

The town where I lived and fought Indians was called Gerrit's Gate. (For the benefit of a generation that pronounces Coney Island and Hoboken as they are spelled, that knows not oely-koeks, and that desecrates suppawn by calling it mush, let me say that Gerrit to the eye is Garrit to the ear.) The story of Gerrit's Gate is the story of Myndert Gerrit and his son, the old gentleman who helped me in my civil-engineering.

Myndert Gerrit came from Schenectady to

found the place. He was a rich man by inheritance, and he had moreover inherited pride, ambition, and a high temper—a mental and spiritual outfit which put him sadly out of place in a conservative old midland town. I do not know just what was his quarrel with Schenectady; but I know he bought his square mile of "military lots" on the shore of Lake Ontario with the avowed intention of building up a town that should be to Schenectady as a mountain to a hill—and that should incidentally outrival Rochester and Oswego. He said, and indeed it seemed, that the finger of Heaven had pointed out the place.

As he stood on the hill to the southwest of his new purchase, Myndert Gerrit saw before him three wooded promontories stretching out into the lake—Near Point to the east, Far Point to the west, and Middle Point, shorter by half than its neighbors, nestling between them, and dividing a large bay into two snug harbors. Middle Point must have been, centuries ago, as long as the others, but it had been fighting a slowly losing battle with the mighty current from the west that swept inward from Far and out again past the end of Near Point. This current made entrance to the western harbor difficult—even dangerous; but the eastern it was an easier matter to reach, and, once in, the largest ship on the lake could lie in safe water while the northwester went by Far and Near and the current hammered away at Middle, making a poor foot a year out of the firm, root-bound soil. And at the head of this little haven

the land lay in a low plateau, forming a natural levee.

Here came Myndert Gerrit in 1822, with his only son (he was a widower) and his whole household, including ten free negroes, formerly his slaves. The son was then a man of thirty, unmarried, and devoted in all things to his father. They were constant companions, and, as far as I could learn, they cared little for other society. Gerrit reserved the high eastern promontory for his own mansion. He laid the foundation that year, while he and his people lived in log cabins. During the summer he surveyed the level land, and staked it out for streets. In the fall he went to New York, and he returned the next spring, leading a caravan of some twenty families, and bringing with him the machinery for a saw-mill and a grist-mill. It was a long and tiresome journey—a great labor of transportation; but, by water and by wagon, they made it in about a month.

Laborers came from neighboring villages (or rather settlements), and ground was broken without delay. They cut a good road running two miles to the eastward, where it opened up a branch of Gravelly River, which gave them flat-boat navigation to the line of the Grand Canal, as they called the Erie, at that time within a year or two of completion.

The mansion on Near Point was finished in September, and the two Gerrits went to live in it. Standing at his west window late one afternoon, he looked out and saw a sight that filled him

with pride. Middle Point was shorn of every tree, and bristled only with surveyor's stakes. Only the great gaps in the earth showed where the twisted roots had been, and these were growing into larger holes, that marked the sites of houses to be. Up in the streets back of the levee a few light structures had already arisen. Two or three temporary docks stretched out into the quiet blue waters of the harbor. Myndert Gerrit looked longest at Middle Point, now a low table of land with water on both sides. A street—or what was to be a street—ran down its middle, from the water to where, at the mainland, it joined the great road that stretched away through the woods to the river—to the great world—to trade and life and fortune.

"Now," he said to his son, "my part is done. I have made all ready for them. Now we may begin to look for returns."

Ay, Myndert Gerrit, your part is done, and it was done when you uprooted the first tree and dug the first well on Middle Point. Look from your window to-day in the red Fall sunset, and see if you can, in your fancy, the town of your love and hope. See the glister of the evening sun on the low roofs of houses, on steeple and spire rising serenely above them. See it redden the chimneys of homes and set its dazzling blaze in the window-panes. Hear if you can, in your thought, the sound of people moving about the streets, of children's voices at play, of clanking anvils, of horses' feet on the roadways, of creaking cordage and

flapping canvas where your laden ships lie at their docks with their white sails emblazoned by the warm light of the west! See it—hear it—be glad of it in the pride of your heart; rejoice in the town in which you have sunk all your wealth and the heritage of your son! For when you wake to-morrow you will awake from a dream, your returns shall be water and the wind of the North; your house shall be taken from you, and in a little while you shall have no part or lot in this home of your own choosing—save in six feet of earth above your face.

That night Myndert Gerrit heard the north-wester come roaring down from the Canada forests; but he paid no heed to it. He had heard it many a night before. It might knock at his headland gates till it wearied, for all he cared.

But the next morning at five o'clock, his son, looking pale and frightened, came to his bedside, and told him he must go at once to the town—so they called it already. He dressed himself and hastened to Middle Point, and there he found all the townspeople gathered. They stood in little knots, or wandered about trying to make out the full extent of the damage. Their faces were pale, and showed ghastly in the gray and doubtful light. A chill of alarm and apprehension had seized them. They looked suspiciously and almost resentfully at the old man and his son. What had these two men brought them to?

Myndert Gerrit saw his great mistake with his eyes, but his heart at first refused to accept the

truth. He was like a man who sees death for the first time, knows it is death, and yet cannot make it real to his own mind that the blood will no more flow in the cold veins, that the heart shall not beat again, that breath and life have gone out together. At first he went about bravely, showing the people how a jetty here, and a dyke there, and a sea-wall in a third place would put all to rights; but even before his hearers had seen that the remedy was far beyond any means that they possessed, he himself knew that the danger to come was not to be met by any scheme of his devising. The greater part of the Point was still there, but fifty yards were gone from the farther end, and the unprotected earth was still crumbling into the turbid current. The cellars were full of water and along the western side deep gullies ran up to the line of the main street. The framework and foundation of the Point were gone; it was a mere bank of earth before that violent and uncontrollable inland ocean.

When he saw this, he went back to his house and locked himself in his room, and not even his son saw him until the next day. Then he appeared again, and tried, for a little, to save the day by moving his settlement farther back. But the panic was too strong for him; the people would have none of him or his settlement. Some of them were for going back to their old homes; but the most went over to Far Point and bought land there, for Gerrit paid back to every man what his land had cost him. Then he took to his bed, and

died on New Year's day, leaving his son to straighten out the tangle of his affairs. This task, prosecuted with the sternest economy and industry, occupied seven years. At the end of the seven years, he had paid off every cent that his father owed, and he himself was able to live on a pitiful remainder of their great fortune, just enough to pay for what little he ate and drank. He lived rent free in one of the old cabins on the level land. That marshy strip was his yet, for no one cared to take it from him.

Middle Point was gone entirely. A low earth bluff marked its landward end. The water had crept up, urged by the current, that now set far in, and out along Near Point; and a shallow inlet ran far up into what had been the levee. On the edge of the inlet, among the low trees and underbrush at the base of the high point on which his father's house had stood, old John Gerrit dwelt in his little log cabin, that had once been the temporary shelter of his father's negroes. He was fifty years old when the sad work of his life was done; and knowing of no other work for himself, having no other aim in life, he sat himself down to live life out without troubling his neighbors.

. . . . . .

A quarter of a century passed between the wreck of the Gerrit fortunes and the days when I first saw the old man, who had once been the young man of the house, walking about the streets of Gerrit's Gate in those unaccountable rusty

clothes of his, which, though he changed them often enough, never looked new or fresh. Gerrit's Gate, in the meanwhile, had thriven, after a fashion, in the very teeth of fortune, and in spite of being settled upon the site despised of Myndert Gerrit. In my boyhood it had a couple of grain-elevators (which changed hands every year or so), a steam saw-mill, a lumber-yard, and a patent-medicine factory. It had old residents and new residents, a conservative party and a progressive party. Need I say that the progressive party was divided from its opponents on the question of getting such an appropriation from Congress as would stimulate the town's consumptive prosperity with the glow of commercial health, and make her the metropolis of the northern lakes?

What I have here set down of John Gerrit's early history I gathered in part from my father, in part from John Gerrit himself. But it was not until after the old man's death that I learned why the old folks of the town called him Squire Five-Fathom. It seemed, an old lake sailor told me, that the water off the end of what had been Middle Point stood just thirty feet deep, and the ridge of rock that had formed the Point's foundation was marked "Five-Fathom Point" on old charts—marked as a dangerous spot, where the current had seized more than one storm-driven ship and cast her against the stony shore.

But what I had heard was quite enough to fire a boy's imagination; and, from the day he first

spoke to me, Squire Five-Fathom was to me a figure of romance and mystery who got tangled up in my dreams with Old Mortality, and Robinson Crusoe, and Ethan Brand—I had no "Jack Popaways" or "Young Gold Coiners" to read about in my lone provincial youth. I stood at the gate to watch him as he went past the house every morning toward the town, on the pitiful little errands of his commissary. How long he made those errands—how much ground he contrived them to cover! Many a time, in later years, I have seen him going from shop to shop, and even wandering in search of street stands, that he might buy the one apple that seemed to him best worth a "penny."

Thus I worshipped for a long time, in silence and at a distance. Then came a dull, cloudy summer Saturday afternoon, when my parents went to Catullus Corners, a town some miles down our little branch railroad, for the funeral of some aunt or cousin, and I was left alone, in charge of an Irish handmaiden, who presently swore me to secrecy and herself went off to a christening. She told me, as she departed, that if I stirred "off the block"—my usual limits of solitary excursion, set by paternal decree—the banshee of the family would catch me. But, ah! I was beyond the day of faith in the banshee, and the Celtic wraith had no terrors for me. I hung awhile on the gate, waiting for some wandering boy that I might lure him in to play with me; but no boy came. As I look back now, it seems to me that boys must have

been very scarce at Gerrit's Gate. Perhaps they were all fishing on that day, for it was cloudy and still. All I know is, they came not. I looked up and down the road. I walked to the east corner and back, and then to the west corner, and then temptation seized me. It was only a couple of hundred yards down the dusty high-road to the head of the lane that led down to the inlet. There, in the mysterious, enchanting thickets by the water's edge, lay the dwelling of the one human being of my acquaintance who looked as though he had come out of one of those books which were far more real to me then than real life.

Far off, the clock in our kitchen struck three. Three long hours before my father and mother should return! Three long hours of a lonely summer afternoon, and only a feeble and inadequate conscience of eight years' growth to stiffen my moral backbone and nerve me to heroism and renunciation! One stray momentary glimmer of sunlight flashed through the clouds, and lit up the leafy entrance to the lane.

Three minutes later I was running down that bough-roofed avenue, my pace gradually slowing, for the gleam of sunlight was gone, and it was dismally dim under the trees. But the delicious thrill of illicit adventure was in all my small body, and by and by I was out of the dim shade and on the broad, open path that the pot-hunters had trodden all around the inlet. Then I saw below me its shallow reaches of water, paved with round stones, and bordered with bushes. Then, almost

before I knew where I was, the log cabin lay right under my feet, between the path and the edge of the inlet.

There were bushes all about it, except for a little space in front. A mountain-ash at one end towered above it, and tossed high in the air its bunches of reddening berries. In my memory of that guilty hour, the smell of the mountain-ash is stronger than the picture of the dark cabin, the dull sky, and, to the northward, the gray, uneasy lake, restless even in that heavy, storm-breeding calm.

I stole cautiously down into the little clearing, and viewed my field of exploration. Smoke rose from the chimney; a smell of broth on the fire overcame the rank, raw smell of the ash-berries. I was too deeply steeped in crime to attempt to resist an irrational impulse which came over me, and I walked up to the door and knocked loudly. Then I stood there with my heart beating hard, like a repeated echo of my knock. Would he come to the door? What would he say? What should I say? Would he speak pleasantly to me? Would he talk to me of his strange history? Should we stray into delightful confidences? Could I trust him with certain speculations which I had long nursed concerning the treasures of Captain Kidd? What was before me—the magic vista of romance, or the bitter ignominy of a snub?

The door opened, and the tall figure of Squire Five-Fathom leaned over me. Between his legs

I saw the fire on the cabin hearth. All else was a smoky darkness. He looked down at me, and his great dark eyes stared, startled, questioning, out of their deep sockets. My hand was in all human probability the first that had knocked at his door in a quarter of a century. Even the tax-collector left him alone.

"What do you want, *little boy?*" he asked, in a voice that seemed to come from the ground underneath him.

Inwardly I was something dashed, but the spirit of my impulse was not to be overcome.

"I have come to call," I said, and I said it firmly.

His eyes, still troubled with the wonder of lonely old age at any unusual thing, looked me all over. Slowly he seemed to comprehend that I was but a natural, mortal boy. His voice had lost its startled tone of depth and had come back to the quaver of old age when he spoke again, asking my name. I gave it, and he repeated it in an accent of recognition mixed with reserve, which I noted at the time without understanding it at all. But I have not forgotten that delicate inflection, and I know now that my grandfather and his father were warm friends, and that their sons knew each other only by name.

However, if Squire Five-Fathom remembered anything of this sort, he checked his memory suddenly, for he drew back with a courteous bow, invited me to enter, and asked me to be seated with a grace so fine and stately that before I had put

myself on a low old-fashioned chair I had forgotten that I had ever been addressed as a "little boy."

While I talked with the Squire I looked furtively around the cabin. I saw first the great fireplace of logs and flat stones, where was a crane from which a pot hung simmering over a light wood fire. Then my eyes rose above the high mantel-shelf, and saw the old flint-lock shot-gun that had been Myndert Gerrit's, hanging on its hooks. Then, bit by bit, out of the dull gloom of the place, I picked the strange appointments of the last home of the Gerrits. Odd bits of makeshift fishing-tackle were all about; some nets hung on the wall over a mahogany sideboard with great claw-feet, on the top of which stood a brush and comb and a poor little square of looking-glass. Opposite these things a pair of oars, wound with twine to cover many breaks, leaned against a lady's work-stand, with its faded green silk bag all in shreds and tatters.

Two miniatures, rimmed with thin bands of gold, hung over the Squire's bed, which was a hospital cot. The white spread was clean, but there were holes in it, and the edges were frayed. On this bed the Squire sat down, by the side of a heap of old clothes. We looked shyly at each other for nearly a minute before we began a formal and elegant conversation.

"It was very kind of you to call—very kind indeed," said the Squire; "but unexpected—quite unexpected."

"Yes, sir," I replied, in all sincerity; "it was very unexpected indeed. I only made up my mind when I heard the clock strike three."

The Squire looked puzzled.

"Do you—do you make many calls?" he inquired.

"No, sir," I replied. Then, after reflection and self-examination, I added: "I think this is the first one I ever made."

The Squire somehow brightened up at this.

"I make very few calls myself," he said; "ve-ry few. In fact," he continued, in a burst of confidence like my own, "I don't think I've made a call in twenty-five years—twen-ty-five years!"

He had a habit of repeating words, by way of giving a gentle emphasis to his speech. That is a trick that rather belongs to old ladies than to old men. He had, in truth, something of an old lady's manner of talking, with an occasional hesitancy as though he were not much in the way of using his tongue.

"It must be lonely for you, sir," I ventured.

"Lonely!" he repeated, in surprise, "why, no! Oh, dear me, not at all." Then he reflected. "Perhaps it *is,* though. I am not sure but that you are right. Yes, I suppose it *is* lonely. I had not thought of it, however."

He mused over this new idea for some moments.

"You see," he began again, "one has so much to think of—so *many* things to think of, that there is really no time to think of being lonely—aha!" —he laughed a crackling, pleased little laugh—

"d'ye see? no time to think of it—aha!"

He smiled over his little ghost of a joke, and I laughed too, for I saw he expected it. That broke the ice, and we became more friendly.

"Why," he said, "there's many a night—many and many a night—when I don't get to bed before half-past eight or nine. But then, you know, I lie awake a good deal, in the course of the night—thinking, too. I suppose that's what keeps me awake. It's wonderful what a deal of thinking there is in this life."

He stopped to think over this, and I hastily took up the conversation, lest he should give over talking altogether.

"I suppose, sir," I said, "you are a great sportsman?" and I glanced at the gun on the wall.

"Oh, no!" he returned hastily, "I was fond of my gun, at one time; but I have lost the fancy. I have so much else to do——" Here his hand wandered involuntarily to the heap of clothes by his side—then it went quickly back to his lap. (I thought he colored faintly.) He looked at me and then at the clothes in irresolute hesitation, and at last said anxiously:

"Would it disturb you if I were to continue my work? It need not interrupt our conversation in the least, I assure you."

"Oh, please don't stop for *me,* sir," I cried, much shocked at the idea. (It is within the memory of the present generation that it was once held improper for little boys to disturb the occupations of their elders.)

"Thank you," he said gravely, and, lifting a faded coat from the heap, he laid it across his lap, and began sewing a worn velvet collar upon it.

"I must have it ready for Sunday," he said; "pray converse."

I stared at him and forgot my manners.

"Is it *your* coat, sir?" I asked.

"It *was* my father's coat," he replied; "but I have cut it over for myself, and it fits me very well—very well indeed."

Every child is something of a snob, and I do not think we can fairly blame the child. We must consider that he has only material standards of comparison; that a fine coat is to him clearly and naturally an object of admiration, while it may take a lifetime to learn the beauty of an ethical virtue; that, moreover, he is, by the necessity of his condition, a dependent, a pauper, who has not yet worked for his freedom and his self-respect. I felt ashamed of my hero when I saw him making over his father's old clothes for himself.

But he was unconscious of my secret condemnation, and he went on cheerfully:

"I should prefer to patronize the tailor in the town—the little tailor from Germany, I mean. He is a worthy man, and it is our duty, of course, to encourage the industries of the place. But my income, owing to circumstances which occurred very long ago—very long ago—is limited, yes, quite limited."

Whatever I may have felt in my small secret

heart, I was mannerly enough to keep it to myself, and even to feign an interest in the old gentleman's confidences; for he went on to tell me with some pride of his achievements in tailoring, and of the almost inexhaustible stock of garments which his father had left behind him—garments, he assured me, much finer in fabric and workmanship than anything that later days could produce. The interest at last became real, in spite of myself, and although I felt that my sympathies were low and reprehensible, when the Squire (with grave apologies for the informality of the act) took off his old coat and tried on his new-old coat, I helped him with conscientious criticism on the set of the back and the fulness of the skirts.

We got to be quite easy and friendly with all this, and when we heard a knock at the door I hastened to save my host the trouble of opening it.

"It's only an Indian, sir," I reported, with easy contempt.

This may sound like a startling announcement; but it was no painted brave who stood before me. It was only a very old Reservation Indian, hideous and wrinkled. Yet he was no darker, no more coarse of hair, and but little dirtier than any one of the French Canadians who lived on the outskirts of the town. I knew him for an Indian only by his high cheek-bones and his tall hat. I regarded him with scornful disgust; but it was only because I conceived that to be the feeling which an American boy ought to bear toward a

colored person who could not speak English, and who lived by selling baskets and feather fans and bunches of Seneca grass.

"It's Abe," said the Squire. "Come in, Abe."

Abe came in, thrust an empty basket into the Squire's hand, and stood still and silent regarding me. One of his eyes was wholly blinded by a cataract; the other, as if it were uncomfortably conscious of having to do double duty, rolled about in a grewsome way. With this eye Abe examined me, and there was no friendship in his look.

The Squire took the basket and put into it some packages which he took from a corner cupboard, talking all the while in a tone of cheery affability, of which I thoroughly disapproved. The Indian responded only by half-audible grunts, which might have meant either Yes or No.

"Ah, Abe," said the old gentleman; "and how is Abe to-night? How is the back, Abe? Did you have any difficulty in finding your way? It's getting dark." (I had noted this as I opened the door, and I had a twinge of conscience.) "Here's the bacon, Abe, and the beans, and the tea; but I can't let you have more than a quarter of a pound —you'll have to put catnip with it. And you have a little sugar left, have you not?—ah, yes, a little sugar left. Well, that will have to do for the present, till better times come, Abe."

Then, with a kindly pat on the back, Abe was dismissed; but on the threshold he paused and turned to say:

"Um biddle new house this side town."

"Yes, yes, Abe," said the Squire, with a smile on his lips and a sad look in his eyes, "it'll come, it'll come. They will recognize our advantages some day, never fear."

And Abe vanished into the stormy twilight that was fast settling down.

"Abe was my body-servant when I was—when I was a young man," said the Squire. "He taught me to shoot—yes, to ride and to swim. We were great friends, Abe and I. And now he is old and half blind, I—I—we help each other along—yes, help each other along."

I had taken my hat to go, but the Squire did not notice me. He had gone to the fire, where he lifted the lid of the pot to glance at its contents. Then he sat down on the low chair I had just quitted, and talked, half to me, half to himself. At first he recalled the days of his hunting and fishing with Abe, and lingered over their common scrapes and adventures. Then he began to speak of his father—in a lower tone, almost reverential in its fondness—and at last he began the story of the wreck of the old man's great ambition. I stood with my hat in my hand, ready to take my leave; but I could no more have gone home than if I had stood on Robinson Crusoe's island, and looked over his shoulder at the footprint on the sand. I heard the patter of the first rain-drops on the one window of the cabin, and the growling of the distant thunder; I heard the full rush of the summer storm break upon us, and

the rain pouring gusty torrents upon the roof; but I stayed and listened and forgot all things, for my excited spirit was back in Myndert Gerrit's world, in Myndert Gerrit's generation.

. . . . . .

"But it will all come back some day," he said, as he made an end of the story; "some day Congress will recognize the vast importance of this location, and build the pier we have asked for. And then it will be only a question of time—only a question of time—till they enclose the whole harbor. And then—and *then*—which is the better site—I ask you on your honor, sir, on your honor as a gentleman, which is the better—this, or *that?*"

He stretched out his long right arm and pointed to the new town, with an infinite contempt on his fine old face. His eyes glowed; his voice had grown deep and hollow and firm once more.

"Some day we shall get the appropriation——"

"But we've got it now," I broke in, speaking for the first time.

"What—what do you mean, sir?"

"We got the appropriation yesterday. I heard father say so last night—I mean, Mr. Tappan told father."

He caught at the sleeve of my coat with his bony fingers.

"What do you say, sir? Say it again, sir!"

"I heard Mr. Tappan tell father that we got the appropriation yesterday—yes, and he said some-

thing about three hundred thousand dollars, too," I asserted with vigor.

"Tappan," he said; "they ought to know. You aren't mistaken? Say it again!"

His voice had now grown tremulous. He was standing erect, trembling with an excitement that frightened me. As well as I could, I repeated the brief conversation between the mayor of the town and my father. He heard me through, I thought, though his eyes glared straight ahead, as though he heard some distant sound. Then, when I ceased, he turned away from me and fell on his knees by the side of the bed, burying his face in his faded coat.

. . . . . .

He knelt there so long that I was frightened, and after awhile I touched him gently on the shoulder. He arose with a start, and I saw that he hardly knew where he was. Then his look fell upon me, and an expression of compunction came over his face.

"My poor boy," he said, "I have been shamefully careless—shamefully careless. You should have been at home long ago. How have I treated the messenger of good tidings!" He smiled again, and this time not only with his lips. There was a light in his eyes that almost made me think him young.

"You cannot go home by yourself," he said; "you must let me go with you." With this he bustled about and brought from a corner a great

mohair cloak with a cape to it. The cape he took off and fastened over my shoulders. Then he put on the cloak, and we set forth.

"I would ask you to stay and sup with me," he said, "but I fear your parents might be anxious: so we will postpone that pleasure—we will postpone it."

As we walked along, he held my hand, and occasionally patted it gently. He kept his face lifted somewhat toward the sky, although the rain beat on it. I thought it must be unpleasant for him; but when he glanced down at me I saw that he was smiling.

We came soon to the dark lane, and here he gently insisted upon carrying me. I made some protest; but he lifted me up, and I felt the muscles of his arm like a bar of iron under my thighs. His tall figure swayed a trifle; but he set a firm foot upon the slippery ground under the trees, and in a little while we were in the high-road. I got down then, and we walked together to my father's door. My heart was beating hard—harder than when I set out.

I am afraid it would have gone hard with me, for it was past six, and the maid was discharged, and my mother wellnigh in hysterics, and my father just setting out with a lantern to call the neighbors, when we arrived. But the Squire took so much blame upon himself, and pleaded for me with such courtly and gentle grace, that my parents contented themselves with harrowing my feelings, which were sore enough already, and so, when my

mother and I had wept enough, I was forgiven, and the Squire went back down the dark highway. He would not be persuaded to stay to supper. "His own was waiting," he said. Perhaps he found in his thoughts better company than we could offer him.

That evening I told my tale, and it excited interest enough to satisfy even a boy. When I came to the part about the tailoring, my mother drew in her breath as though she were in pain.

"Oh," she cried, "I wish we could do something for him; but I suppose——"

My father shook his head.

"We could only wound him."

The comments of my parents on the whole story cleared my infant mind of one set of snobbish ideas, and I perceived that even old coats and Indians were entitled to respectful consideration from a white American boy who was still walking around in the clothes his parents had bought for him.

Nor was it long before Abe and I were friends. This friendship came as a corollary to my greater friendship for his patron. I was allowed to visit the Squire at all proper times and seasons, and there grew up between us a strong attachment. This association was of infinite value to me, and I humbly trust that it brought some pleasure into the dear old gentleman's life. It certainly drew him somewhat nearer to his fellow-men. On dark evenings he would walk home with me, and stay to chat with my father for a half-hour. Never could

he be prevailed upon to share our evening meal, save on a formal invitation delivered the day before. Then he would come in his best black satin stock and his favorite coat, and would hand my mother into the dining-room with pomp and circumstance.

On one of these occasions we had a Distinguished Guest, a Travelled Celebrity at the house, who fell in love with the Squire's sweet and simple courtliness. "Madam," said the Celebrity to my mother, after Mr. Gerrit was gone, "I need no inducement to avail myself of the chance of accepting *your* hospitality; but were I invited to meet that gentleman who has just left, in the hovel of a Pawnee Indian, I would come, if I had to come from the Cape of Good Hope." This praise of my idol so filled my boyish heart that I lay awake half the night thinking of it.

As the years went on, the Squire and Abe took me into their united lives, and we formed a triple alliance. Poor Abe's part in this was but small. He lived on the Squire's slender bounty, and the only "help" he could give in return was a lively sympathy with his benefactor's ambition. Of this he knew more than I had thought possible. As I grew older, and acquired an intelligent comprehension of the hope that was the old Squire's life, I found that Abe had concentrated all the mental powers he possessed on that one subject.

When I was fourteen, the great pier was nearing completion. It ran northeastward from Far Point, and was to be supplemented by a similar

structure extending due north from the eastward end of the town. From the mouth of the inlet we watched its daily growth, expectant of an end unforeseen by the builders.

It was the first warm day in June, and the three of us sat on the shore. Abe, with his head cocked on one side, so as to bring his work within the range of his good eye, was making a fleet of toy ships out of the chips washed to our beach from the distant lumber-yard. We watched him intently.

He launched eleven ships, and was setting the twelfth in the water when, of a sudden, he turned his one eye toward the lake, and with his trembling thin brown fingers pointed to a stake set amid heavy stones a hundred feet from the shore. There the first ship of his fleet danced in the breeze —danced out to the stake—beyond it—into how many feet of smooth water I know not; for it had not gone two yards before the Squire was laughing and crying at once, I was shouting with all the strength of my lungs, and even the old Indian had raised his stiff arms above his head, and stood swaying them from side to side, thanking his Indian god after his Indian fashion.

The great pier on Far Point had crawled out till it stemmed the current and turned it off from the shore. With every stone that should be laid, with every day's work, that terrible stream would be forced further and further out—further and further away from our level shore. Our day had

The engineers had builded better than they knew. The old Gerrit site had been such a thing of tradition, such a futile memory of the past, that it had been left out of the townspeople's calculations, and no one, save the Squire, had considered that the removal of the current from its low shore must bring it once more into usefulness. But Gerrit's site spoke for itself. The pier crawled out fifty feet farther that summer, and the water in the inlet began to sink. No longer fed by the resistless current, it fell away in scattered pools. In September I walked dry-shod where I had waded ankle-deep in June.

"Our time has come," the Squire said, his face beaming; "we'll buy the old house back and when you come to pass the night with me, my boy, remember that your room is the little one over the front entry—you won't forget—eh?—you won't forget?"

It was true enough. Something that looked like fortune lay close ahead. The ship-captains brought the news of the shifted channel; the towns-folk came out to look at "the flats a-dryin' up;" hard-featured men of business discussed the ways and means of draining and filling in. By September there was no talk of building the second pier between the Squire's land and Gerrit's Gate: it was to go westward from the extremity of Near Point, and there was to be a Gerrit's Gate in very deed between the two breakwaters, wherethrough Prosperity should come from the North, scattering plenty from full hands.

Of course the lands should have been sold for taxes, over and over again; the Squire had but the simplest notions of business, and altogether he would have reaped little good of his fortune had not my father and a few of the older residents made a friendly league to protect him. He was deeply grateful to them, although he had not the slightest comprehension of what they did for him. They secured his property to him, and he sold his first lot in October, and marked it off on his father's map. He would recognize no later survey.

He sold one or two more lots, and then the sale stopped. Nobody was willing to invest money where it could only lie idle until the completion of the harbor-works gave the new port a positive value. This grieved the old gentleman's soul. He had begun to look upon his father's old house as his own; it seemed a hardship to be kept out of it another year just for the want of a few beggarly thousands of ready money. That was all that he needed. The present owner was ready and willing to sell. He was a prosperous Westerner, who had brought an ailing wife to Gerrit's Gate in the hope that the strong lake winds might strengthen her. They had, however, availed only to keep her within doors and make her fretful. Mr. Garbutt, for himself, was disgusted with the whole town. He despised its petty hopes, he laughed at its modest future; he called it old-fashioned and behind-the-times, and he openly expressed his desire to

sell out at cost and go to some region where, as he expressed it, things were alive.

Fifteen thousand dollars would buy the whole Point, and the Squire made several attempts to get this money at a ruinous sacrifice. The friends who had saved him before stepped in and drove off the sharpers who would have taken advantage of him, and for the first time I saw the old man bitterly and unjustly angry. He was kept out of his house, he cried—why were they keeping him out of his house?

By November the Squire had become so fretful and unreasonable that his friends decided upon raising the money for him at their own risk. This took some time. Money was not plentiful in the town, and it was hard to negotiate a loan that must wait a year or eighteen months for its interest and arrears of interest. During the week required for this piece of financiering, I was deputed to keep an eye on my old friend, and I passed most of my time, out of school-hours, in the little cabin which the Squire had declared he would not quit until he took possession of his father's house.

The last day of my watch I went to the post of duty with a heart less light than usual. For two days the old gentleman had been silent, dull, and depressed. I wished the financiers would hurry up and let the Squire and me be happy and cheerful once more.

I was surprised to find the Squire cheerful, even gay. His depression had vanished. Had I been

a little older I might have suspected the feverish excitement that had taken its place; being only a boy, I accepted it gratefully, and we set about cooking our supper. We had royal suppers nowadays. There was a hot, peppery fish-chowder that the Squire alone could make, a great slice of smoked eel broiled to a rich golden brown, and baked potatoes the best in the world—baked in the ashes. And new cider to wash it all down!

But though all was good, and I ate as a healthy boy should eat, the Squire hardly touched his food, and seemed to be in haste to make an end of the meal. When it was done, he changed his everyday coat for his best—the same old best coat—and took down his great cloak from its hook.

"Come, my boy," he said excitedly; "come with me! I've triumphed at last—at last—at last!"

"What do you mean, sir?" I asked.

"I've got the money," he shouted, almost like a madman. "They'll keep me out of my own house no longer. I've got the money. I sold the water-front to-day, my boy, and I've got the money, here, here, here!" and he slapped his breast-pocket with his trembling old hand.

"Sold the water-front?" I cried. "Oh, sir——"

"Never mind, never mind," he said, frowning; "there's more—there are acres and acres. And what do I care for it all? I'll have my father's house this night—this night. You hear me, sir!"

I loved him well, but I was only a boy, and I had neither the wit nor the strength to combat his resolution. I felt that my father should be sent

for, but I knew that I could not find him in time to be of service. The Squire was determined to go to Mr. Garbutt that night and buy the house. I spoke of necessary papers, but he would have none of them. What did he care for papers? Let the lawyers see to the papers in their own good time. That was their work. He would pay his money, and own his house. He could not sleep in it; but he would sleep owning it.

The northwest gale was a tempest when we started up the hill. It was hard work to fight our way across its path; and the booming of the great waves far off at the end of the Point frightened me, long as I had known that dreary sound.

When the great door of the house opened for us, and we stepped into the broad entrance hall, we were breathing hard—I from exhaustion; he, I verily believe, from sheer excitement. He looked about him with a wild, uncertain stare. Perhaps, for the moment, he thought it was a dream. Then he grasped my hand firmly, and stalked ahead of the servant into the drawing-room, a vast apartment where Mr. Garbutt sat in his velvet smoking-jacket, grand and lonely.

In Mr. Garbutt I found a friend. He was short, he was fat, he was vulgar in every stitch of his clothing; but he had brains in his big bald head, and a heart sound as the diamond on his breast. The Squire stated his errand, struggling between dignity and impetuosity, and Mr. Garbutt listened, at first in astonishment, and then with a quick understanding of the situation, which he promptly

conveyed to me by a quick, significant twist of one eyelid. It was not even a wink; but I knew that he understood. When the Squire ended, he rose politely.

"Set down, Mr. Gerrit," he said; "set down, sir. We folks out West do business putty lively, but we ain't got to your style of speed yet. This thing ain't to be done quite so quick."

The Squire forced himself to sit down.

"It must be done to-night, Mr. Garbutt," he began.

"It'll be done to-night," said Mr. Garbutt, reassuringly; "but it's got to be done business-like. I can't give you a deed——"

"Your word, your word, Mr. Garbutt," cried the Squire; "your word is quite enough for me!"

"Ef I sh'd die to-night," said Mr. Garbutt, impressively, "my word ain't wuth shucks to my executors, without papers to back it. *I* know *them*, 'n' *you* don't. Now, you jest dror up to that little desk there, an' you write me a little sort of a letter, makin' me an offer for the prop'ty, an' I'll write a letter acceptin' your offer. Then I can stow your money away 'n' feel that all's business-like 'n' right. How's that?"

The Squire sat down at the gaudy little desk and tried to write; but his hand trembled so that what he wrote (I have the sheet now) was but a tremulous scrawl that no man could read.

Meanwhile, Mr. Garbutt was addressing me in my capacity of guardian.

"Know your pa, don't I?" he said. "You

kinder look after the old man, eh? Got sorter crazy on this business, ain't he? Well, you tell your pa that I'll lock the old man's money up safe for the night, an' he can call 'n' get it when he wants to. Oughter have some one appointed to take charge of him. Heard he sold out his whole water-front to-day to them swindlin' speculators from Buffalo. Well, I'll fix him up somehow to-night, and quiet him down a bit. Can you git him home?"

Mr. Garbutt kept his promise, and he managed matters with a skill at which I marvel as I look back upon it. When the Squire had finished his poor pretence of writing, the Westerner took the scrawled sheet, made an effective pretence of reading it slowly and critically, and then sat down at the desk and wrote a business-like acceptance, which he made me read after the Squire had looked at it. He examined the drafts which the Squire tendered him, and laid them away in a gorgeously bedizened safe in the wall.

"There," he said, "that's settled. Possession in May, as per my letter. But if you don't conclude to close, Mr. Gerrit, it ain't no more than an option. Suit yourself. Anyways, we'll wet the transaction."

He rang for a servant, and had a decanter of sherry and three heavy cut-glasses set on the table. We must each take a drink, to bind the bargain, he said.

We filled our glasses and lifted them. Mr. Garbutt and I were about to drink, when we saw that

the Squire held his glass poised before his lips, and that he looked expectantly toward us. I did not understand what this meant, but Mr. Garbutt did.

"Thinks he's at home," he whispered to me, with a chuckle. Then he inclined his head toward the Squire.

"Your health, Mr. Gerrit," he said; and we both drank, and the Squire after us, bowing courteously.

"I don't blame you, Mr. Gerrit," said Mr. Garbutt, lolling back in a great velvet easy-chair, "for buying this piece of prop'ty, as a matter of fancy. It's a first-rate house, an' a good bit of land, I'll say *that* for it. But, as for me, this town ain't 'live enough for me. Mrs. Garbutt, she mostly goes to bed 'long about eight or ha'-pas'-eight, an' I set here 'n' read Patent Office Reports till I go to sleep. If there's any society here, it ain't took the trouble to root *me* out."

Here he noticed that the Squire's glance was wandering about the room. The old man was looking at the unfamiliar furniture in a puzzled way.

"Things seem a kinder new, eh?" suggested Mr. Garbutt. "Well, I put some money into this here set. Rosewood, the hull of it. Good stuff—the best there was when I bought it. Maybe you'd like to take it off my hands? Well, no, I s'pose not. Come pretty high. *Well,* now! I hadn't thought of that. There's all your old traps up garret. Found 'em here when I come here, an'

couldn't quite get a straight title to 'em with the house, so I packed up these. Plenty of room, says I—might's well be filled's not. I didn't jest feel safe to give 'em away—don't know as anybody 'd want 'em. First-rate furn'cher, too; but mahogany—old's the hills—out 'f fashion. No sort of good to me."

"Did you say, sir," asked the Squire, with a suppressed earnestness that suggested a return of his earlier excitement, "that my father's furniture is now in the attic story? I should greatly like to see it, sir—I should greatly like to see it."

"Why, cert'nly," said Mr. Garbutt, rising, with an uneasy glance at me; "glad to have you see it if you want to; but I don't think you'll find any use for it. Putty well eaten up by this time, I guess."

It was clear that the Squire had set his mind on it, in spite of anything that his host could politely suggest, and as soon as Mr. Garbutt could procure a hand-lamp, we began the toilsome ascent of the back-stairs. Here the windows faced the north, and caught the fury of the storm. The external wall of the house fairly shivered as the recurrent blasts struck it, and the strong wind, coming in through the cracks of the windows, set our lamp flickering. I was second in our line, and, looking over my shoulder, I saw the Squire's familiar face distorted in the wavering light. Up and up we mounted, until we crawled through a narrow hole, and a smell of dry dust and seasoned wood told us that we were in the garret.

Mr. Garbutt lifted the lamp above his head.

Its light illumined but a small space in that great chamber under the roof. It fell upon the old furniture of the old house—great pieces of solid mahogany, of broad and generous lines. The cushions were moth-eaten and faded to the color of the dust that covered the polished wood. Still there was a stern dignity about their dishonored forms, almost a sentient resentment of the indignity put upon them. "First-class furniture—in its time," said Mr. Garbutt, as if he felt the need of apology.

The Squire said nothing. He walked among the flickering shadows, and looked from one thing to another with a steady gaze. Once or twice he laid his hand on some table or chair, and I thought that he had a particular reason for doing so.

After he had seen all that lay within the light of Mr. Garbutt's lamp, he came back to where we were standing, and, laying his hand on my head, gently stroked my hair. He must have stood thus full a minute, while neither Mr. Garbutt nor I spoke. Then he turned aside, and going to the west window (he walked through the darkness as one who knows his way) he opened it and looked out. I followed him, and looked over his shoulder.

The Squire looked out upon the same view on which his father had gazed when the fortunes of the Gerrits were at their height. Only now he could see nothing of the plain of promise upon which his father had rested his eyes. All below us was hid in blackness. Looking toward the west, we could see the mad turbulence of the bay, and just beyond it a line of clear white—a line that

came and went, was broad and dazzling for a second, and then narrowed into darkness. It was the sea breaking on the great pier.

As we stood there, we could hear nothing but the deafening roar of the wind as it rushed in great shuddering blasts through the window. Then, as the ear grew accustomed to the noise, we caught the tremendous undertones of the storm, and at last could distinguish the heavy fall of each successive wave upon the far-off pier.

I was gently drawing the Squire away when there came one of these falls so tremendous that it seemed as though the house shook in answer to it. We all stood still, and then came a second shock so awful that our very thoughts stood still, and we were like stunned men for the moment. When we turned our eyes to the window, we saw the line of white for the last time; a fainter sound of falling billows reached our ears, and we saw only the confused turmoil of dark waves where the pier had been.

. . . . . .

"Where is the old man?" Garbutt asked, a moment or two later and we both listened. "Great God!" he cried, "where is he going?"

We could hear his footsteps going down the uncarpeted stairs, and we followed him as fast as we could; but he was outside before we got to the outer door at the foot.

Garbutt tried manfully to run, but he had no strength for such a race. I was strong and swift,

for my age, and I ran at full speed down the winding path, and in the first flash of lightning saw the Squire far below me, rushing down the hillside, through the trees and over the rocks—taking, as I saw him, a leap that would have killed any sane man.

He was far ahead of me when I reached the level of the shore. I had lost him in the darkness; but a great wave rolled up a wall of light, and against it I saw the Squire's form, with his arms raised high above his head. He ran upon the wave; I saw him beat his arms against it as if to drive it back, and then the wave melted into the night, and when the next wave came I could not see him.

It was six o'clock in the morning when I again came to the place with the searching party. A dim sun shone from the east over the heaving waters. Against its light we saw Indian Abe coming up from the lake, along the edge of the flooded inlet, bearing on his back his master's body.

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